BHIWANDI-BOMBAY RIOTS
ANALYSIS
AND
DOCUMENTATION

Analysis and Compilation

By

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Dedicated to the
memory of the Victims of
Bhiwandi-Bombay Riots

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PREFACE

The Bombay-Thane-Bhiwandi riots in the third week of May, 1984 were a great nightmare. They were also unique in many respects, worse than the communal frenzy witnessed immediately after the partition. The Institute of Islamic Studies, aided by Ikhwanus Safa Trust, has investigated many major riots and prepared reports on them. The Bombay-Thane-Bhiwandi riots, however, were very wide-spread and unprecedented in their fury of destruction of life and property. We, therefore, thought it necessary to visit all the areas and do a thorough investigation so as to bring on record what happened, why it happened and how it happened. We have also included in this report, by way of documentation, the provocative statements and interviews of Bal Thackaray, the Shiv Sena chief, the report of his speech in Akhbar-e-Alam and editorial comment in Sobat (a Marathi Weekly from Pune), all of which were thought to be immediate cause of the communal frenzy that broke out subsequently.

We also thought it necessary to include some editorials on this issue carried by prominent dailies and weeklies, as well as some important reports and comments which appeared in Sunday Observer. We have tried to give all possible figures of dead, injured and arrested wherever available both official and unofficial. The value of properties destroyed is available only in case of Bhiwandi, although in other cases the losses are no less staggering. However, no reliable figures for these areas are available. We hope this report-cum-documentation would be of some help for research scholars as well as lay readers and it woud enable them to understand the 'why', 'how' and 'what' of these riots.

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Asghar Ali Engineer

18-6-84

WHY IT HAPPENED

Ten Days That Shook Bombay Bhiwandi An Analysis of Events

By Asghar Ali Engineer

The recent outburst of communal violence in Bhiwandi-Thane-Bombay indutsrial belt has, while confirming some theories of communal violence, blasted many others. These riots have once again woken us to the reality, if we want to wake up, that the beautiful mosaic of races, cultures, languages and religions can easily turn into a volatile mix and explode at the hands of some mini-fascists or a cheap demagogue, causing untold misery to thousands of helpless people. The targets of attack in such cases are those people against whom it is easier to arouse emotions for a variety of reasons What follows is an attempt to analyse what happened in the industrial belt of Bhiwandi-Thane-Bombay.

Various explanations are being offered by journalists and politicians, many of which are quite valid although they do not quite come to grips with these complex events. An oversimplified or mechanical approach would not do. A social scientist has to grapple with this complex problem from various angles both at the micro as well as the macro level. As already pointed out, there have been myriads of partial explanations like builders' conspiracy to get slum-occupied plots vacated, fight between rival criminal gangs taking communal turn, envy of rural poor against prosperity of urban areas like Bhiwandi assuming communal form etc. etc. These are micro causative factors no doubt, but do not by themselves offer a comprehensive explanation of these recent riots. The whole thing needs to be seen in a larger perspective. We can neither ignore ideological motives nor

local reality. Ideological motives are as impo tant as objective reality After all, human beings, whether they succeed or not, wish to make this world of theirs according to their desires even if they have to reshape, change or distort the objective reality. A mere empirical approach would not be satisfactory fo: our purpose.

Before we come to grips with local realities, we would like to discuss the national situation as a whole. There is a dialectical relationship between the two. Ours is a dynamic society beset with serious problems of socio-economic growth. The significance of the fact that widespread communal violence has taken place in an important industrial belt of the country should not be lost on us. Seen rather mechanically working class in the most industrially advanced cities should be free from the virus of communalism. But something quite contrary to this has happened, and not for the first time. Both unionised workers and lumpen elements have taken part in these riots.

Due to the slow and distorted growth of capitalism, India's social formation has emerged full of contradictions both social as well as economic often getting sharpened in times of economic crisis. We have most advanced technology along with most backward socio-religious consciousness. We have most advanced urban areas in uncomfortable conjunction with most backward and poor rural areas. We have tribals and Dalits still living the most primitive life, slogging as slaves and bonded labourers. We have most advanced and modernised urban elite who have discarded all religious traditions on the one hand, and masses of people, illiterate, ignorant, drawing their spiritual sustenance from the most primordial traditions. The slow and distorted growth of capitalism in our country has thrown up these contradictions which are ironically getting more and more sharpened with more and more slow and distorted growth of the Indian economy.

It should also be noted that socio-economic growth, even if slow and distorted, brings greater consciousness of

their rights among the backward sections and religious minorities. Again, this consciousness in a backward society gets expressed through assertion of religious and communal identity because of its emotional appeal and mobilizatory potential. Assertion of neo-Buddhist identity and rise of Ambedkarism among the Dalits of Maharashtra, conversion of Harijans to Islam and Christianity in the South to acquire a new psychological identity, rise of Sikh and Muslim fundamentalism should be seen in this perspective. This assertion of religio-cultural identity makes it clear that religion, despite autonomy of its own, is not a causative but an instrumental factor as far as communal violence is concerned.

Many modernist elites often mistakenly hold religion as the main culprit and see renunciation of religion as the real solution of the tangled communal problem. It is far from true. Religion as a spiritual force cannot be eradicated from our society, whatever our subjective wish; nor can its eradication lead to the solution of communal problem in view of its instrumental role. Intra-religious and intra-communal conflicts can be as much dangerous as the cases of Pakistan and Iran-Iraq conflict prove. One instrument can be replaced by another of equal emotional and mobilizatory potential, as long as the root cause persists.

When lower castes or minority communities assert their rights through emphasis on their religious or communal identity, a section of the majority community takes recourse to it with greater virulence as well as efficiency. The leadership of majority communal parties arouse a deep sense of fear and induce siege mentality and they succeed in their venture as the members of majority community see their privileges threatened due to greater assertion on the part of minorities. The communalists thunder that the minority is getting more and more aggressive, it is multiplying very fast, soon to overtake us. (Vishwa Hindu Parishad during the Ekatmata Yagna organised by it distributed pamphlets saying about Muslims 'We are five and our

twentyfive' i.e. one Muslim man with four wives and twenty-five children) and create another Pakistan, its loyalities are elsewhere and not towards the country and so on and so forth.

Such propaganda, whatever its truth value, has powerful appeal specially for urban lower-middle classes. And it should also be borne in mind that the greater the socio-economic crisis, the greater is the appeal of such propaganda. Such propaganda ultimately results in an outburst of communal frenzy (more often such an outburst is carefully planned) against minority community, impelling it to become more communal conscious, and using this communal consciousness as proof of its aggressiveness and perpetrating violence against it. Thus minority and majority communalism feed on each other and become endemic to our social system. This is what we have been witnessing for the last several decades.

We cannot get away from the fact that our religio-cultural upbringing deeply influences our perceptions and our ethos, and that the acceptance or rejection of certain things pertaining to the opposite community depends not so much on their truth-value but on our ethos. To get out of these religio-cultural ethos is as difficult as getting out of the pull of gravity. Most of our stereotypes for the other community are fashioned by our ethos and not by objective reality. Most of the middle class Hindus accept as 'fact' without questioning that Muslims marry four wives and they beget hordes of children, that they can never be loyal to this country, whatever evidence to the contrary. Such stereotypes get further strengthened by aggressive propaganda by communalists and are used for legitimising violence aganist Muslims. In the present frenzy of communal violence in Bombay and Bhiwandi the Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray made maximum use of these stereotypes. He launched his offensive against Muslims on 21 April at the Chowpatty meeting describing them as 'landyas' — a derogatory term for circumcised Muslims, and as a fast

spreading cancer and asked the Hindus to perform an operation to wipe out this cancer. In the light of the foregoing discussion, one can very well see the mischief-making potential of such pronouncements. We did see this potential actualised.

II

As we discussed above, religion is an instrumental and not a causative factor in communal violence. Despite persistence of religious hostility among the members of two communities, they do not fly at each others throats until some political party or group decides to exploit the feelings of religious hostility for achieving certain political goals. The causative factor is political-ideological. A deeper probe in any major communal riot would confirm this. In a backward religiously dominated country like India even secular parties find it irresistible to make use of caste and religion based communities for their political purposes. The ruling party has been playing this game quite cynically. The entire election arithmatic is worked out by it on this basis. The ruling party in the present political scenario has been trying to cultivate upper caste Hindu votes and subtly encouraging Hindu communalism. A careful study of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election speeches during the last assembly elections would bear this out. Mrs. Gandhi is no longer so sure of Muslim votes (some recent election results has further convinced her of this) and hence her greater inclination towards the upper caste Hindus. The Harijan votes too cannot be taken for granted by her any longer.

The 'secular' parties like the Congress-I, Congress (S), Janata as well as several other regional parties do not hesitate to readily align themselves with communal and chauvinist groups and parties. What is worse, even established communist parties are no exception to this. Such opportunist alliances give respectability and creditability to these rank communalists. All this is done to win few more

seats in the elections. Thus almost all parties have made, at one time or the other, alliance with the Shiv Sena in Bombay. Also, it is a known fact that the Shiv Sena was not only encouraged but created by the ruling Congress with active support of certain industrialists in the late sixties to combat the influence of CPI on the trade union front as it happened to be a period of recession and deep economic crisis at the time. What could be more painful than the fact that even Mr. Dange, against whose party (i.e. CPI) the Shiv Sena had gone on offensive in late sixties should choose to speak from its platform sitting side by side with Bal Thackeray.

It would be no surprise to note that Mr. Banatwala and his Muslim League against whom Bal Thackeray is hurling invectives had entered into alliance with him in 1979. After the alliance was struck, Bal Thackeray in a meeting held on 24th February, 1979 at Mastan Talab, had said "Shiv Sena is not comprised of Hindus alone; there are Muslims, Parsis and Christians and people of other religions as well. Whatever we have done for our Muslim brothers it has not been publisized in papers... We have helped in construction of many Urdu schools and mosques. We invited all but no one heeded our call. Our sincerity was doubted... Whatever I do for you I would do on humanitarian consideration, I will do for you what Banatwala and Zaidi cannot do..... "

"Today almost entire Muslim population", he said, "lives in hutments. Who is responsible for this? Why have Urdu boards been put up only in Muslim localities? Why not in entire Bombay? I am not a political leader, I am a political cartoonist. I consider political game as an abuse. Come with us with same sincerity we have come to you. Do not mix poison in this sincerity..... I am very happy that today green and saffron flags are fluttering together."

One would hardly believe that it is Bal Thackeray speaking. Such are the miracles of opportunist political

alliances and their outfalls. Of course, alliance between two communal parties is not as painful as that between secular and communal parties. The Shiv Sena or Muslim League would not have been as strong as they are today had they not been courted for favour by almost all secular parties. The Shiv Sena would not have been able to get away with all this mischief had the ruling party in Maharashtra not allied itself with it in the recent past. It was very painful to see the city of Bombay slip under the control of Shiv Sena while the government looked on helplessly. It appeared as if the Chief Minister had abdicated in favour of Bal Thackeray in those fateful ten days. The Chief Minister had no political will to control the situation. The present riots have brought into sharp relief the dangers of political alliance with communal and chauvinist groups. It is not that the ruling party or other secular parties for that matter are not aware of this danger. They deliberately strike these alliances to make political use of religious chauvinism. Such are the compulsions of distorted capitalist growth for the ruling classes.

III

After considering the issue in the large national perspective, we would now consider it in the light of certain local developments. While discussing the dynamics of capitalist growth in backward countries, one must remember that it results in emergence of certain negative problems that are difficult to control. The emergence of a parallel black economy, migration of labour from rural to urban areas (i.e. in the pockets of industrial growth) and consequent multiplication of shanty towns, increasing pace of unemployment and fast growth of lumpen elements prone to anti-social activities, are some of them.

All these factors have a multiplied effect on the growth of powerful crime gangs. Growth of black economy puts money in the hands of speculators, profiteers, hoarders and

others This neo-rich section craves for foreign goods, creating pressure for smuggling. Smuggling draws ever a greater number of people into its fold, multiplying criminal gangs, specially in bigger coastal towns. Growth of working class, petty vendors and other lumpen elements in shanty towns also leads to greater demand for illicit liquor and bootlegging, again throwing up powerful criminal gangs engaged into these activities. There also come into existence, in shanty towns and other places, matka and gambling dens run by powerful criminals. Again all these crime gangs need illicit weapons, manufacturing of which throw up more criminals. Thus urbanization leads to a higher crime rate and an ever-multiplying number of criminals locally called goondas and dadas.

Of late, the role of these crime gangs in communal riots is found to be increasing. There are several reasons for this. These criminal gangs, in order to operate within socially safer limits need both social legitimacy as well as political protection. For obtaining social legitimacy they identify themselves with their community and try to emereg as its protectors. They also throw in a lot of money on celebration of religious festivals which soon assume a political complexion. In the event of any communal trouble, they throw themselves in and see therein an opportunity to be utilized. They also join some or the other political party or group to obtain political protection and respectability. Politicians are no less eager to oblige in view of their money and muscle power. In fact the emergence of Shiv Sena should be seen in this perspective. A great deal of underworld elements could seek political legitimacy through it. What happened in the Cheetah camp during the recent disturbances is highly illustrative of this. A very powerful Muslim crime gang led by Lambu Alim had joined Shiv Sena and constituted its local Shakha with Lambu Alim as its Shakha pramukh. After the out-break of riots in Bhiwandi with the involvement of Shiv Sena it lost its legitimacy in the eyes of local Muslim population. It immediately switched its loyalty away from the Shiv Sena and

trouble ensued in which more than 8 persons lost their lives.

The police also gets increasingly involved into the activities of these crime gangs. The police not only gets *hafta* (graft money) but it also has to cater to political pressures In the event of trouble like the present communal disturbances, it either finds itself paralysed or actively collaborates with the trouble makers. Communal ethos also play a very significant role in this collaboration. It was an almost universal complaint of the victims of the riot that the police actively sided with the mischief makers. No doubt the communal ethos were a motivating factor, but the lack of a firm political directive to put down the riots played no mean role. The Vasant Dada Government was politically weak and could not afford to earn the wrath of the Shiv Sena chief.

The theorists of communalism have been postulating and rightly so, that communal riots often take place in middle-sized towns which are more conservative and wherein lower middle classes play the leadership role. Highly industrialized cities like Bombay were considered a safe haven. Moreover, the city of Bombay had not seen communal violence with such virulence ever since 1947. Perhaps it has now exceeded even that in its fury and spread. One needs to explain this. No doubt Bombay is industrially most advanced and has a large working class population which ought to militate against the onslaught of communalism. However, there are other factors to be reckoned with. Apart from the growth of anti-social elements, the city has to face continuous influx of population from rural and semi rural areas. All these people cannot be absorbed in industries and end up doing odd jobs and retaining their rural or small town conservatism. In fact each shanty town is a rural ghetto. Frustrations of life in Bombay and problems of shanty towns also rub them the wrong way. All this becomes a volatile mix and it needs little efforts in such a situation to set communal passions afire. One must take note of the fact that most of the

disturbances took place in hutment areas in Bombay and its suburbs. The other disturbed areas were those of central Bombay like Kamatipura, Kumbharwada, Mazgaon, Pydhonie, Byculla, Parel and Lalbagh. Some of these areas like Kamatipura are not only highly congested but are also dens of criminals. In these areas mainly stabbing incidents took place, unlike those of slums where burning of huts and looting were the order of the day.

It is very difficult to establish a uniform pattern of violence in Bombay city and suburbs. In some of the hutment areas like Baiganwadi in Govandi, Cheetah Camp in Trombay and Jawaharnagar in Santacruz east, local animosities and other factors were also operating although communal motives were also obvious. In central Bombay there was tendency to settle old scores and even to kill one Hindu for every Muslim killed. One can say the nature of communal violence in Bombay city and suburbs was as complex as the character of Bombay city itself. It is also a fact that in suburbs wherever Muslims were scattered, or in small minority, they were brutally attacked and their houses or huts razed to the ground and everything looted.

I saw this in Eastern suburbs like Ghatkopar, Vikhroli, Bhandup, Mulund and Thane. In all these areas Muslims live in scattered areas and even a hut at a far off place was not spared. The mosques too were razed to the ground and in some cases like Tagorenagar, Vikhroli East and Subhash nagar, Bhandup West, even the aged pesh Imams (prayer leaders) were murdered in cold blood. In most of these cases, our investigations showed, no animosity or any other disputes were involved. No other motive except communal hatred could be established. It is also interesting to note that in all these attacks only Marathas or supporters of Shiv Sena were involved. Other Hindus, whether Gujaratis or from North or South either remained neutral or in some cases actively helped Muslims against assailants who were mainly from outside. Though called Hindu-Muslim riots, its regional character cannot be lost on any observer. It is

also interesting to note that Dalits by and large did not take part in rioting against Muslims except where they happened to be supporters of the Shiv Sena for certain reasons, or local animosity or gang rivalry happened to be the main cause. Almost all Muslims affected by riots who were interviewed by us testified to the fact that attackers were Maharashtrian Hindus and that other Hindus remained neutral.

Another thing which could not be lost on any perceptive observer was the well-planned character of the attacks. They were well-timed and aimed at depriving Muslims of their means of livelihood. Bakeries, timber shops, mutton shops, auto rickshaws, sewing machines, garages, tongas etc. were special targets of attacks. When houses were plundered, nothing, even glass for drinking water was not left. Most of the inmates fled in terror simply with the clothes they were wearing. We saw house after house and hut after hut looted and razed to the ground in most distant places in eastern suburbs.

It has often been said that living together can mitigate prejudices and ensure better integration between various communities. The present riots do not bear this out; on the contrary they negate this assumption. Those Muslims who lived among Maharashtrians, both in hutments and lower middle class localities have suffered most. This can be observed in case of eastern suburbs and Thane. In Thane there are nearly 22,000 Muslims out of a total population of three and half lakhs. Except in three localities where they are concentrated, they live scattered all over Thane. Muslims in their own mohallahs like Mahgiri and Rabori did not suffer much as they could beat back the invaders, whereas they suffered most wherever they lived surrounded by Maharashtrians. The unfortunate result of this riot will be that the tendency to live in separate community-wise bastis would become stronger. What is more unfortunate, the members of the majority community have not tried to instill a sense of confidence among the riot affected Muslims

and persuade them to come back. Muslims are hesitating to return for fear of fresh attacks and in many areas hoodlums go around intimidating them.

Nothing much has been reported in the press about the havoc wrought against Muslims in Thane. At the Mamun-Bhanja Dargah on a hillock behind Wagle Estate where a large number of Muslims from a nearby Jhopad Patti had taken refuge, around 40 persons are reported to have been killed. One of the survivors of the tragedy gave us this figure. Even if the figure is exaggerated, the gravity of the crime should shake our conscience. Bal Thackeray charged Muslims for being anti-national and urged the Hindus to wipe out this 'cancer'. One would like to ask him were these poorest of the poor Muslims — who have hardly any time except for hard struggle for their livelihood anti-national? Do they even have any idea of national consciousness? They hardly know anything beyond their struggle for bread. Who would anyway determine who is loyal and who is not? Hoodlums on the street? None of us would be safe in that case. Morever, how many of us can truly boast of putting nation above everything else? How many of us are above narrow linguistic, regional chauvinism and caste and communal loyalties? Why then kill these poorest of the poor and deprive them of means of their livelihood, which are already very meagre anyway? Those who incite such passions are the real anti-national elements as they do the greatest harm by widening the gulf of suspension and misunderstanding between various communities.

IV

Much has been written in the press about the communal flare-up in Bhiwandi. I do not propose to repeat what has already been published about the main events. However, it would be worthwhile to analyse what happened during these disturbances. It is also worthwhile to compare the pattern of riots in Bhiwandi in 1970 with that of the

present one. One striking difference is that in 1970 the main damage was caused within the town (burning of looms, stabbings and killings) and the town people fanned out in villages to kill isolated families of Muslims. In terms of loss of life much greater havoc was caused in these villages.

This time the pattern has reversed. The people from villages came and wrought havoc on the outskirts of Bhiwandi. The Muslims in villages are reported to be safe. Why this change in the pattern? A social scientist must seek adequate causes of the same and offer satisfactory explanation. One explanation offered is that Hindus in Bhiwandi have been outnumbered (Muslim population in Bhiwandi is around 60-65%) by ever increasing Muslim population due to influx of migrant U.P. workers. Increased prosperity and expanding powerloom industry necessitates this migration. There are predominantly Hindu villages around Bhiwandi and the Hindus from these villages were mobilised to compensate for lesser population of Hindus in Bhiwandi town. It is partially true.

The BJP which was not overtly involved in the present riots has been steadily expanding its base in these villages. Despite its secular avowals for electoral politics it continues to draw its ideological sustenance from tre RSS ideologues. It can hardly free itself from RSS moorings. Expansion of BJP base is accompanied by generation of communal ethos in one or the other form. Only in November, 1983 the BJP had mobilised large number of Hindus from these villages around Bhiwandi to oppose construction of slaughter house by a company known as Al-Kabir. It did generate communal ethos. Dr. Vyas who is the leader of BJP in Bhiwandi was quite active during the 1970 Bhiwandi riots. Apart from Dr. Vyas other leaders like Vikram Savarkar have reportedly addressed number of meetings in these villages. All this is not unconnected with the mobilization of these villagers for attacks on Bhiwandi.

Communal conflict has been rightly considered as an

urban phenomenon. Rural areas by and large have not been involved in such conflicts. However, in Bihrasharif riots too villages on the periphery were drawn into the vortex of communal violence. Biharsharif is also a fast developing town whose urban boundaries are expanding and land prices soaring. There too RSS had been expanding its activities in the villages. Also, like Bhiwandi, in Biharsharif Muslims have achieved a measure of prosperity.

To Bhiwandi, as pointed out above, are being attracted large number of Muslims from U.P. (as also Annas from South) who are expert weavers. These Muslims, or at least some of them, through enterprise and hard work, purchase a loom and begin their own business. Usually they are financed by Marwaris. It is interesting to note that Marwaris, then in 1970 as well as now, were not involved in communal riots A relationship of mutual dependence between them and Muslims has developed. The process of economic development, it must be remembered, while generating conflict between certain communities also brings about integration of some communities.

It was pointed out to me by a very knowledgeable person in Bhiwandi that in 1970 riots Marwaris godowns were looted in Hindu localities whereas they remained safe in Muslim localities. The reason is obvious. Muslims were dependent on Marwaris for their running of powerlooms. Marwaris, therefore, had shifted their godowns to Muslim localities after 1970. However, this time, it was pointed out by the same person, their godown were looted in both Hindu as well as Muslim localities. With urbanization in Bhiwandi, a large number of anti-social elements have also migrated to this town. In fact Azmi Nagar on the outskirts of Bhiwandi was notorious for housing known hardened criminals from U.P. Involvement of such criminals cannot be ruled out in loot and plunder. Also, in some mixed localities like Ghunghatnagar, it was pointed out to us by the victims, godowns belonging to Marwaris were looted by Hindus as

they financed these Muslims who were prospering.

There is another important aspect related to this. Many Muslims in Bhiwandi have set up their looms and have improved their lot somewhat. Some South Indian Annas too (though on a lesser scale as compared to Muslims) have entered into this arena. Marwaris and Gujaratis of course are financial magnates. Maharashtrians, on the other hand, hardly own any loom out of more than 2 lakh looms operating in the town. Such a situation does cause its own tension Thus it can be said that the economic development in Bhiwandi while producing a relationship of dependence between Muslims and Marwaris, has generated tension between Muslims and Maharashtrians. This underlying tension is taken advantage of by rank communalists for generating orgy of communal violence.

Most of these Maharashtrians in Bhiwandi come from nearby villages and an integral relationship between them and these villages remain. This was observed in case of Biharsharif also. The main conflict there erupted between Muslims and Yadavas, a middle Hindu caste. Most of these Yadavas come from nearby villages, were cultivators, and had an eye on the plots of Muslim cemetry lands. When the conflict erupted these peripherial villages also got drawn into it. The case of Bhiwandi is very similar. The peripherial villages from where Maharashtrians are mostly drawn (belonging to a middle caste known as Agri) supplied the mobs who charged on hutment colonies on the outskirts of Bhiwandi and inhabited by Muslims. Thus it can be said that the villages on the periphery of a fast developing urban centre are likely to be drawn into violent conflict, including that of communal nature specially when it is provoked in an organized manner.

The nature of destruction and the scale on which it has been done indicates definite planning and careful organization. The underlying tensions do exist between certain communities but it does not erupt into large scale violence

without provocation, planning and organisation. Some of these bastis were razed to the ground and before doing so everything inside these kutccha or pucca structures was looted. The mobs had come equipped with necessary instruments to demolish these bastis. After the operation it looked as if there was an aerial bombardment in the area.

These explanations of economic, cultural or political nature are quite important in understanding periodic eruptions of communal violence. Their importance cannot be underrated but one can also hardly deny what can be called autonomy of communal ethos which unfortunately remains unmitigated historical legacy. Its existence is fundamental to communal violence although various other factors aggravate and exacerbate it. Without these ethos it is not possible to involve entire cross section of population in such furious attacks and wide scale destruction. Such ethos are very deep rooted against Muslims whereas they are in the process of arising between Sikhs and Hindus and Hindus and Christians. The quantity of armaments discovered in the Golden Temple is very large indeed. Had one tenth of this quantity discovered in any mosque it would have led to widespread violence against Muslims Loyalty of Muslims is repeatedly questioned and it arouses deep hostility among common Hindus. Such hostility among the Hindus, at least outside Punjab, against the Sikhs has not been in evidence although the Sikh extremists raised the slogans of Khalistan and killed number of Hindus in Punjab. Despite all this Bal Thackeray was questioning the loyalty of Muslims and inciting violence against them. Not a word was uttered against the Sikhs. Not that he should have. The loyalty of Sikhs, like that of Muslims, cannot be questioned What I am trying to say is that as far as Hindu-Muslim relations are concerned, there is definite historical legacy which plays very significant role. If the Sikh problem is not solved in an amicable spirit Hindu-Sikh hostility may also get sharpened and become a historical legacy.

The role of left parties also needs to be seriously exa-

mined in view of persistence of communal violence. The left parties do not seem to be serious about facing this fascistic challenge. They contend themselves by issuing statements after every major communal riot. They forget that each riot increases degree of communal consciousness in both the communities fast eroding class consciousness. The class consciousness of workers changes into communal consciousness overnight on both the side of communal divide. There are various instances of Maharashtrian workers having attacked their fellow Muslim workers during these disturbances in Bombay-Thane region. The working class solidarity was nowhere to be seen.

In city like Bombay where there are largest number of workers in India communal riots could have been effectively curbed if the working class had stood up firmly against them. Due to serious lack of ideological education workers are workers in functional, not in ideological sense. The communist left should take this challenge very seriously in its own interest. The communal fascists have already shown their fury. It is really unfortunate that there hardly exists any left movement in the largest industrial belt of Bombay-Thane-Bhiwandi. The city has not even witnessed any big morcha on any question pertaining to common people. The left parties are too busy in parliamentary game to think of mass agitations. Such agitations can certainly weld people into impregnable unity. Moradabad, Bhiwandi, Malegaon and similar other more and more working class towns and cities are becoming endemic centres of communal violence. Soon it would be too late for the left even to repent.

It is only the left, in particular the communist left, in my opinion, which can throw serious challenge to communal forces in this country, only if they realise this. The ruling party is not interested in solving the communal question; it exacerbates it as we saw in the case of Bombay-Bhiwandi riots also, in its own political interest. But if the left parties too neglect it, the dooms-day would not be far off.

The Role of the Police & the Military

It was the unanimous opinion of the riot victims of all the areas of Bhiwandi, Thane and Bombay that the Police sided openly with the rioters and miscreants. Not only did they aid abet the miscreants, but also fired on the victims when they came out of their houses to protect or defend themselves. There were many instances pointed out by the victims, of looting of houses by the police and SRP. We were told in Rasulabad in Bhiwandi and Shivaji Nagar, Govandi that Military people shot at SRP jawans looting the houses, despite repeated warnings. But this could not be confirmed through other sources. The police and SRP in many cases beat up innocent people, dragged them out of their houses and shot them dead. Cheetah Camp is the most glaring example of this.

Almost all the victims of the riots told us that they felt safe only after the military took over. The role of the military was very impartial and inspired confidence among the people. The situation in Bhiwandi came under control only after the Military took over. They could stop riots by plugging the routes through which the miscreants from certain villages were coming to Bhiwandi. The police also could have done this, if it sincerely wanted to stop the riots. The police on the contrary, as pointed out by the victims, was actively helping these miscreants coming from the villages. Many riot affected people pleaded with us in Bhiwandi and other areas to impress upon the authorities not to withdraw the military for the month of Ramzan (i.e. during the month of June) as they could not be safe under the police

The police was issuing biased Press statements. Further, whenever a Hindu was killed he was allowed to be immediately identified by his community, whereas when a Muslim was killed no such identification was allowed. Some journalists drew the attention of the Prime Minister to this.

The Government even shrank from deploying adequate SRP contingents for controlling the riots. During the mill strike earlier it had deployed 19 contingents of SRP when in fact no such wide spread disturbances where taking place. Whereas during these disturbances it deployed 5 contingents. This speaks volumes about the political will of the government to control the riots.

The Role of Government

It would not be incorrect or any exaggeration to say that during these communal disturbances in Bhiwandi, Bombay and Thane the government as if just ceased to exist. The Chief Minister had no control over the situation. The Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray, the chief instigator of these riots was not only continued to give provocative statements but also boasted in an interview carried by India Today dated June 15, 1984, "I know my strength otherwise this would not have happened what do you see today", He was obviously referring to the riots which he admits were his handy work. But the government headed by Vasantdada Patil had no courage to take any action against the Shiv Sena chief. The police, it seemed, was not under his control either.

Strongly enough the chief minister was blaming Urdu papers for instigating the trouble. At a press conference in Mantralaya, the chief minister said, "There are two or three Urdu papers which have misquoted Bal Thackeray. We are taking action against them." Asked how he knew that Thackeray had in fact been misquoted and not quoted correctly, he said that the Shiv Sena chief had made a statement to that effect. Thackeray, he said, had not piled invective upon Prophet Mohammed but had praised him as a great man.

When it was pointed out that Thackeray could be whitewashing his own earlier statements, Dada said that the Sena

chief had promised him a tape-recording of his speech at Chowpatty. The tape, however, had yet to arrive. It was ridiculous that the Chief Minister of a state was depending on a person who was in the dock for the provocative speech he was alleged to have made. It clearly means that the intelligence department was not functioning at all. Even the police commissioner Mr. J. F. Ribeiro later on said in a press conference that he does not know which intelligence officer had covered Thackeray's meeting on 21st April, at Chowpatty.

The chief minister also categorically refused to ho'd judicial inquiry into these riots. Needless to say judicial enquiry have been held for communal riots on smaller scale elsewhere. These riots were very wide spread, well planned and organised. Almost all areas of Bombay including distant suburbs were shaken by the riots. The truth could have come cut only in a judicial inquiry. Even if nothing had happened besides Cheetah Camp where it would have warranted judicial inquiry. Instead the government has ordered only high level departmental enquiry. The departmental enquiry can never inspire confidence among the people.

Vasantdada Patil's government appears to be very weak and infirm. His cabinet is also divided into rival factions. Besides this the chief minister had his own political considerations for being lax towards miscreants and their leaders. For all these reasons it was quite clear that it was not the Vasantdada ministry but the Shiv Sena which was ruling Bombay during those aweful 10 days which shook Bombay, Bhiwandi and Thane.

After the outbreak of communal violence in Kherwadi, Bandra East on 22.6.1984 the government showed some guts and arrested 40 Shiv Sena shakha pramukhs including the main leader from the area Mr. Madhukar Sarpotdar. This action instead of leading to greater disturbances sent Bal Thackeray rushing to Chief Minister's house with an appeal to release his lieutenant and he assured the Chief Minister of his cooperation to maintain peace in the city. He also

appeal to all the shakha pramukhs to maintain peace not to associate themselves with the anti-social elements.

This clearly shows that Bal Thackeray is not a force he often brags about. It is only ruling on other politicians who helped him rise for their own selfish ends. Had strong action been taken earlier against his provocative statements Bombay would not have been rocked with communal frenzy and hundreds of precious lives and property worth several crores would not have been destroyed. But for narrow selfish political ends neither the Chief Minister Vasant Dada Patil nor the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi wanted to touch Bal Thackeray even with a barge pole. They could see innocent human beings killed and properties destroyed rather than alienate upper caste Maratha votes. Bal Thackeray's inflated ego could not have found freeer reign than in those 10 days of communal madness in and around Bombay.

WHAT HAPPENED

In the following section, we are presenting detailed reports of events that occurred in Bhiwandi, Thane and Greater Bombay. We have tried to be as objective as possible and have based our reports on factual investigation in the riot-affected areas. We have interviewed victims both in their areas of residence and in the various relief camps and social workers and other knowledgeable people in these areas. →

RIOTS AFFECTED AREAS IN BHIWANDI

Ghunghat Nagar

This is situated inside the Bhiwandi town. It is a predominantly Hindu locality with a few Muslim houses. According to one resident there are around 300 Muslim families in the area. The trouble is stated to have begun this area where some Muslim youth started hoisting a green flag and removing Shiv Sena Saffron flag. This incident is considered as the 'triggering' incident. This took place on 17th May, 1984.

There are a number of powerlooms in this area. We were told that around 250 powerlooms belonging to Muslims were destroyed. The attack began around 12 noon on Friday. The attackers were outsiders as well as some residents from the locality. In this area there was no history of communal conflict earlier. Most of them lived in peace and harmony. But when the attackers came from outside some local Hindus joined them in the looting. Local Hindus were mainly Bhaiyyas from U.P.

There are a number of go-downs in this area belonging to Marwadis. These go-downs were also looted by these Bhaiyyas. The reason for looting Marwadi go-downs, the Muslim residents informed us, was that the Marwadis advanced loans to the Muslims. It is very difficult to establish this but the main motive might have been simple temptation to loot.

Four persons, all Muslims, were injured in police firing in this locality although none were killed. However, four

children are still missing. According to Muslims in the area, the Police and SRP played a partisan role and fired only on Muslims. A Madarsa in the locality was completely destroyed. Most of the Muslim residents had fled after the attack. Their houses were looted and ransacked.

Azmi Nagar

It is almost entirely a Muslim basti, the number of structures estimated to be 3500. This is situated on the outskirts of Bhiwandi. According to the spot interviews, the assailants came mainly from the villages situated at a distance of 1 to 1½ K.M. This colony is situated partly on Durgah trust land, partly on privately owned land. The name of the village from where the assailants reportedly came was Karol. Most of the residents of this basti are powerloom workers. There were some notorious anti-social characters as well living in this area. These anti-social elements were mainly involved in petty robbery cases. Most of these anti-social characters were Muslims from U.P. They too fled when the attackers launched their attack on Friday i.e. 18th May after morning prayer. The mob was estimated to be 1000 strong and most of them were from the village Karol. The attackers were led by Shiv Sainiks and they fired from their rifles for more than 12 hours. Some of the residents who were in the area at that time told us that the attackers had full support from the local police and SRP. The entire basti was razed to the ground and even pucca structures were not left intact. It appeared as if there was aerial bombardment on the basti. About 3500 structures were demolished. However, no damage was done to the Durgah of Diwan Shah. All the house-hold goods including radio & T.V. sets, fridges, fans, house-hold goods utensils, ornaments, clothes etc. were taken away. The residents fled with empty hands. Most of them are now in one or another relief camp.

Deeper probe revealed that the land dispute also played some part in this sordid attack. As pointed out earlier, part

of the land belongs to Diwan Shah Durgah and a part to a private owner. Earlier a substantial chunk belonged to one Lakshman Tawde. It is said that he sold his lands to a Muslim who is also a trustee of the Durgah. With more development and increasing population, land prices in this area have been soaring. It was alleged by a Muslim advocate from Thane that there was direct or indirect hand of some people who owned land in this area, to raze the basti to the ground so as to get vacant land, and make more money. The Muslim trustee who owns a big chunk of land in this area is alleged to have made a large fortune by selling trust lands.

Azmi Nagar was entirely a Muslim basti. The number of dead in this attack was around 10. All the dead were Muslims.

Naibasti

It is predominantly a Muslim locality with a few South Indian Hindus also living there. The Number of hutments is estimated to be a little over 4000. This basti came into existence after 1970 Bhiwandi riots. Most of the 1970 riot victims were settled here. This is situated on the outskirts of Bhiwandi near a foot hill. There were hundreds of hutments along the slope of the hill as well. The total number of structures destroyed is estimated to be 4000 — all belonging to Muslims. All the huts were razed to the ground. Only a few pucca structures partly burnt and partly demolished could be seen. The few hutments and other structures belonging to Hindus were left untouched.

According to the residents interviewed in the relief camp organised in the locality itself the assailants came from a village 1 K.M. away. The names of the villages were given as Temgarh and Bhadvad. The mob was led by Shiv Sainiks. The attack started on 18th May at 9-9.30 in the

morning. The mob looted everything inside the houses before burning and demolishing the structures. Even the pucca structures were demolished. A Hindu shop was also looted. The whole colony was soon burning. The fire brigade could reach only upto the pucca road. It sprinkled water for sometime and went back. All 4000 Muslim houses were completely destroyed. The hutments and structures belonging to South Indian Hindus known as 'Annas' remained untouched. However, a Hindu doctor was stabbed.

The residents said that the Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully together. The attackers came from the nearby villages. Deeper probe revealed that the villagers about a K.M. away staked claim on the land on which Naibasti was situated. According to them, the hutments were erected on the lands where their cattles used to graze earlier.

The residents claim that at least 30 persons were killed in Police firing in this area. All those killed were Muslims (except one Hindu doctor who was stabbed). The residents said the police & SRP made Muslims their target and sided with the assailants from the two villages. Shiv Sena organised carting away of looted materials, it was alleged by the victims. The lorries and tempos employed bore the following numbers : MRR-3676; MMT-968; MRD-2026; MRD-2060; MRO-6620; 6209; 3336; 1280. 2026.

Rasulabad

This is a predominantly Muslim locality on the outskirts of Bhiwandi. There are around 4000 structures in the area including both pucca structures as well as hutments. There is also a technical institute where 50 to 60 students are studying. The technical institute was attacked but the students, including two Hindu students who are studying there, repelled the mob. No damage was done to the

building of the institute. A number of residents of Rasulabad, especially women and children had taken refuge inside the institute building. The students showed exemplary courage and saved the lives of the women and children. We were told that the police and SRP even refused to cooperate with the students to take the women and children away safely to othes places or relief camps.

Like other bastis in Bhiwandi, here too most of the residents are powerloom workers. There are very few owners of powerlooms amongst them. Most of the residents of this area are Muslims from U.P. and Khandesh. In this locality also the attack began on Friday morning. The mob came from Kamba, Kattai and Khooni villages. It was alleged by some of the residents in the area that Mr. Ramchnadran, the son of the DIG was signalling to the police. About 10 pucca structures were burnt and three chawls demolished along with 1000 huts. Two Muslim women were burnt to death. Two women were burnt alive in Joshi Hospital, Brahman Ali. About 45 houses were looted. The residents also told us about a ghastly tragedy which befell Dr. Ejaz's family near this locality. Dr. Ejaz lived in Taher Baugh on Kattai road along with his wife and children. His entire family consisting of five members was hacked to death. Before burning or demolishing the structure, the mob looted everything. The residents alleged that the police and SRP encouraged the mob to do so. Some of the constables and SRP jawans shouted slogans like "Shivaji Ki Jai". Peace was established in the locality only after the military came. According to the residents, military fired at two SRP jawans in Kanheri village when they were busy looting. The residents alleged that a mob led by Santosh Guru, Keshaw, Eknath and Hemant, while attacking Escobhai (Nagar (part of Rasulabad), asked the Muslims there if they would eat pork. On refusing they were struck with weapons including swords.

The attack on Rasulabad also seems to have been moti-

vated by Grampanchayat election rivalry. There are 12,000 voters in Rasulabad area. The candidate from the Khooni village was contesting Grampanchayat election held in April, 1984. Though the majority of the voters are from Rasulabad, the booth was set up in Khooni village. This led to a dispute and the election had to be postponed in this constituency. The candidate had warned the residents of Rasulabad of dire consequences. In this case of Rasulabad, even adivasis joined the attacking mob. One Wahab Ansari was said to have lost goods worth Rs. 1,20,000 in the attack. The area was almost deserted when we visited it for fear of further attack. Some of the residents who had come to see the damages to their houses told us that further attack would follow if the military is withdrawn on June 2, 1984.

Gouripada

This is a mixed locality in Bhiwandi town. The total population is estimated to be 4000, and the proportion of Hindus and Muslims is nearly 50 : 50. There are a number of South Indian Anna weavers also living in this area. However, the Annas did not participate in the attack. They remained neutral. The local Maharashtrian residents joined the attackers although there was no communal tension before. Hindus and Muslims burnt each others houses in this locality, although the Muslims suffered more. We saw four structures in a row belonging to Hindus having been burned. One hotel belonging to a Muslim was gutted. One Mohsin Mohammed Hussain complained that his house was looted and he sustained a loss of Rs. 40,000/-. In this area there is a building 'Millat Manzil'. There are 26 families living in it. The owner of the building Mr. Mu
Ghafoor told us that the SRP jawans went in'
e-hold goods belonging to
burnt two scooters parked
burnt remains of the two
npound. The SRP jawan

the building ostensibly to search for weapons but began to loot the tenants. This incident occurred on 18th May between 12 to 1 noon. However, no other Hindus had joined them in this loot. It was also alleged by some Muslim residents that one Vinayak Patil fired continuously for two days from the terrace of his building. Mr. Vinayak Patil owns an Ice Factory and a hundred powerlooms. However, when we talked to some South Indians, we were told that some Muslims also fired from their houses and set fire to some Hindu houses. They also said that a 12 years old boy Rajan Shethy died when hit by a bullet. The trouble started at Karoli area at 6 A.M. on 18th May. About 150 huts belonging to Hindus were burnt . An office belonging to Rajeshan Ramulu was burnt, causing a loss of Rs. 29,000.

Ansari Baugh

This is situated on Bombay-Agra Road near Bhiwandi and belongs to one Mr. Ibrahim Ansari. It consists of a garden plot, a powerloom factory and a residential bungalow. Across the Agra Road there is a hutment colony where Hindus and Muslims lived together. There were around 40 Muslim families in this hutment colony. When they felt threatened, they requested Mr. Ibrahim Ansari for refuge which was readily granted to them. These 40 families took refuge in the compound of the bungalow along with their meagre belongings. There are 800 families out of which 40 were Muslims. All their huts were destroyed after they sought refuge with Mr. Ansari.

The mob, consisting partly of the Maharashtrian residents of the hutment colony across the road and partly of outside elements, surrounded Ansari Baugh on 18th morning Mr. Ibrahim Ansari made repeated telephone calls (15 in all) to Mr. Ramchandran, Commissioner of Police, Thane, for sending police help. But no police help was sent. On 18th morning Mr. Ansari personally went to see

the Commissioner of Police and gave a complaint in writing. He was promised police help, but it did not materialise. When Mr. Ansari returned, there were only a couple of policemen outside the bungalow compound. The mob attacked the compound at about 10.30 A.M. They were shouting 'Ek Dhakka Aur Do; Pakistan Tor Do'. The power-loom factory in the compound was completely destroyed. 27 persons from amongst 40 families who had taken refuge in the compound were doused with petrol and roasted alive. Two more bodies were taken out from a well in the compound the day before we visited Ansari Baugh. Thus in all 29 persons were killed. 28 Muslims and 1 Hindu. The mob also attacked the bungalow and set fire to it We could see only the outer walls of the bungalow-everything else inside was destroyed. Mr. Ansari's family took refuge in an inner room and defended themselves by firing from licenced rifles. Police help came at only 2.15 P.M. The Police party was led by DCP, Gaekwad who fired and ultimately dispersed the mob. The ghastly tragedy of Ansari Bough is beyond description. Apart from the lives lost, damage to the property, according to Mr. Ibrahim's son, was around Rs. 14 lakhs. According to Mr. Ansari the attacking mob was led by Mr. Sudhakar Patel a local Shiv Sena leader. The mob was armed with swords and rifles. It had brought grass and drums of kerosene in a jeep. We talked to some of the survivors of the riot, Locked outside Ansari's house was a whole family : Mubarak Ali, his wife, Shamim Banu, and their children, a daughter aged 10, and a son aged 7. "I saw them kill my brother with my own eyes," Mubarak Ali says, "and then I saw nothing. I was hit across the eyes, and I was blinded by the blood. I heard Shamim, my wife, shouting "You've blinded him, now let him go". "Cut off his head", someone shouted, and I felt Shamim throw herself upon me, covering me on the ground. With one hand, she had deflected the sword blow. "Kill me first", I heard Shamim shout, "and then my children." Then I felt her picking me up and the children as well with her other hand, and we were running.

They chased us. Every few yards, they pulled at her hair, but Shamim never let me go.

"Somehow, with the kids, she managed to drag us the entire 200 yards stretch to the octroi naka, where we saw a sub-inspector ;and a few constables. "What have you come to us for?" the inspector said. 'You'll trap us as well. Run for your lives." "It's better that we die here, at your feet," Shamim said. We sat there till the police reinforcements arrived. Then the inspector put us into a jeep and had us carried away to safety."

Ghulam Mohammed, one of the survivors at the Baigalpura relief camp, was locked out with both his sons. When the mob closed in, he had only his younger son, aged four, with him. Niaz, his 11-year-old son is missing.

"When I saw that the door was locked," Niaz said, "I crept under the first thing I could find -- a pile of green grass that lay close to the wall, next to a taxi, that had been set on fire. I lay there for four hours. They never thought to look there. They never found me." Ghulam Mohammed, Niaz's father, crouched only a few feet away, with his younger son. "The burning taxi," Ghulam said, "was sending out thick clouds of smoke so I thought I'd hide behind it. They never saw through the smoke."

Mohmmed Khalil, an old man of about 60, rushed into the toilet of the adjoining guest house, and locked himself in. He heard two men outside saying : "There's an old man in there. Let's get him," Khalil doesn't know why they never did.

Maimunsha, who was also locked with her three children could find no place to hide. Like Shamim, she pleaded for her life. Her husband remembers, "one or two of the men hesitated. The other urged that she be killed. In those critical moments, Maimunsha got away."

"What is there to tell?" 11-year-old Niaz says. "I saw it all. They had everything with them, and they used it all. I saw men carrying bombs in each hand," he says, cupping his own palms. "I saw them hacking at the legs of people who were running away."

"The things I've seen", Suleman, another old man who survived Ansaribagh says. "I saw them cut down a relative of mine and then they heaved a stone on him. I can still see the blood leaping from his mouth." Both of Ghulam Mohammed's sons saw sights like these, and other women and children who were saved in Ansari's house, walked out to see their husbands and fathers burnt beyond recognition. Only the youngest of the children, babies in arms, smile. Katekar, the sub-inspector who stood guarding the octroi naka only 200 yards away while the killing and arson was on, was immediately suspended.

THANE

In Thane Muslims are generally scattered in different areas. However, there are a few localities like Rabodi, Mahgri etc. where Muslims are concentrated. In Muslim majority areas nothing much happened, major disaster taking place where there were only few Muslim families. Several shops were looted and burnt and houses plundered. Residents were mercilessly beaten up and even killed in such areas of scattered Muslim population. The riots were nothing short of a major disaster for the Thane Muslims.

In Thane there are 22,000 Muslims according to the 1971 census. But unofficial estimates claim a Muslim population of around 40,000. In all, the Thane population is 3½ lakhs. Thane has developed as a major industrial centre, besides Bombay. A large number of Muslims from all over India have been attracted to Thane for its business and job possibilities. In Thane we found Muslims from U.P., Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, A.P. and Tamil Nadu. Most of these Muslims are either working in industries, employed in shops, domestic servants or earning their livelihood by vending fruits and vegetables, plying rickshaws and tongas, and other odd jobs. These are very few businessmen and professionals. In other words, a vast majority of Thane Muslims belong to the poorest of the poor, and live in different slums of Thane. It is these Muslims who mainly suffered in the recent communal riots.

What follows is an areawise account of death and destruction during these riots. Needless to say it was the Shiv Sena which was main culprit in the brutal destruc-

tion of the lives and properties of Muslims. Though Muslims had collected some missiles like stones, bottles etc. in certain majority areas for facing the attacking mobs, we did not get any evidence of Muslims having taken major offensive in the communal riots in Thane.

Narvel Compound

This compound has some factories and godowns belonging both to Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Two saw-mills belonging to Muslims were burnt and a truck parked outside also belonging to a Muslim was reduced to ashes. A chemical factory belonging to a Bohra Muslim in the compound was however, not burnt as it would have damaged the adjoining factory and godowns belonging to the Hindus. The total loss was claimed to be around Rs. 14 lakhs in this attack which took place on the night of 23rd May. Mr. Ishaq Narvel, the leasee of the compound, made repeated phone calls for police protection but no protection was provided by the police.

Very close to this compound is Rabodi which is a Muslim majority area. Most of the Muslims who fled from different areas of Thane either due to fear of attack or after the attack have taken refuge in a relief camp organised by the Rabodi Muslims. According to the organisers, there were about 4000 Muslims in this camp alone. In this camp there were Muslims from Wagle estate, Vardag Nagar, Huzuri Dargah, Azad Nagar, Indira Nagar, Mamubhanja Dargah etc. We talked to the residents of this camp and got a great deal of information about the losses to life and properties sustained by Muslims. Most of them fled from houses and huts only with the clothes on their bodies. Everything else were burnt or looted. We were told that the riots had begun almost simultaneously on Friday the 18th of May. It was also on 18th May that the riot had begun in Bhiwandi and other areas of Bombay.

In Thane apparently there was not much of communal tension. Only an incident of conversion of a Bihari Hindu to Islam had taken place two years ago. This converted-Muslim had married a Muslim girl and had frequent quarrels with her over bringing money from her father. The deputy Shiv Sena chief of Thane, Mr. Anand Dighe took advantage of this quarrel and compelled Abdullah, the neo-Muslim to convert back to Hinduism. The ceremony of reconversion was held with great fanfare near Wagle estate. Highly inflammatory speeches were made at that time, but not much notice was taken of these outbursts by the people of Thane. Even during Shiv Jayanti celebrations in Bhiwandi, communal temper had not risen in Thane. It was a sudden eruption on 18th May along with happenings in Bhiwandi. A black board outside the Shiv Sena office near Rabodi carried a slogan in Marathi "Remember — the Muslims disloyal to India must meet with death". But we were told by the Muslims in the area that "we restrained ourselves and did not get provoked by the slogans."

The first victim of the riots in Thane was Mr. Haroon Mujawar, a forty-year-old scientist working in Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. He lived in a bungalow surrounded by Maharashtrians in Boach Bakharia. His father-in-law Mr. H. Y. Sheikh told us that he had very friendly relations with his neighbours, and had even donated Rs. 501/- when a new branch of Shiv Sena was started in that area. An attempt was made to set fire to his bungalow but it did not succeed. Later the other residents of the bungalow were brought out safely to Rabodi.

According to information gathered by us at Rabodi by talking to various people, we learnt that about hundred godowns, timber marts and bakeries belonging to Muslims were completely burnt. These timber marts and bakeries mostly belong to the Muslims from U.P.

We were told by some Muslims in the relief camp who had fled from Mamubhanja Dargah area that about 40 per-

sons were killed on the hillock near the Dargah. These 40 Muslims had lived in hutments at the foot hill, and had taken refuge in the Dargah. These killings, we were told, also took place on Friday i.e. 18th May. Besides this, the organizers of the relief camp informed us that upto 30th May they had buried 64 bodies which were brought from different areas of Thane. This did not include those killed near Mamubhanja Dargah.

A very tragic case was brought to our notice when we visited civil hospital, Thane to meet the injured. A young lady Kamrunnisa aged 26 years lived with her husband in a chawl in Khopat. Their's was the only Muslim family in the building. The mob attacked her house on 21st May and stabbed her husband Anwar Khan aged 30, (working as a Manager in AVT Parcel Service) and threw both of them from the window of their house on second floor. Her husband died on the spot, and she fractured her leg. Her six-months old daughter was fortunately with the neighbour at that time and thus remained unharmed. The mob however was enquiring about her baby, Kamrunnisa told us. She informed us that "the other neighbours did not come to our rescue". Another injured lady Khurshidbi told us that she was living in a slum in Indira Nagar. The mob attacked the area on 28th May. Her son Jamaluddin aged 30 was killed and she was injured with lathi blows. They took away everything in the house and demolished the hut. She was all alone and did not know what to do and where to go. Her husband Bashakhan was in the relief camp at Rabodi.. Basha Khan also told us that his daughter Saira Banu aged 17 was raped. The police refused to register the case of rape but agreed when threatened with demonstration by women. Some Shiv Sainiks in Wagle estate police station threatened this girl with dire consequences if she tried to identify those who raped her. We were also informed by Mr. S. Y. Sheikh and others in the Rabodi relief camp that 40 young girls were missing and police have not been able to trace them so far. One woman called Roshan told us that her house was attacked and

looted and the tanga which was the only means of livelihood for her family was burnt. In Azad Nagar slum according to another resident, 30 houses were looted and burnt. Mustaq Kasim from first Rabodi told us that "we were attacked at night with soda bottles and acid bulbs etc.," and that six Muslim houses were burnt and looted.

From Rabodi and other areas the police had arrested in all 246 Muslims and 60 Hindus. The Hindus were released on bail next day, whereas the Muslims were still not released (upto 30th May). According to Rabodi Muslims, they had thrown stones only in self-defence and had not taken any offensive. "We did this only to ward off mobs and still police has arrested so many of us while they have spared Hindus who were attacking us. Not only this the police was openly supporting the Shiv Sena mobs. Whenever we were attacked either the police did not come, or if it came, it helped the rioters."

One Mr. Shaukat Ali told us that Mr. Mohammed Qasim Ali Chand was burnt alive in presence of police. He did not remember the date of the incident correctly. He also said that even during curfew Muslims were beaten up by goondas and in Shivaji Nagar, second Rabodi, when Muslims went to extinguish fire on 20th May the police beat them up. One Fatimabai Mohammed Hussain who lived in Azad Nagar told us that her house was attacked on 20th May, by a mob led by Tukaram and Kapil Dev (ex-municipal councillors). "Our two tangas — the only means of livelihood for us — were also burnt. We had lived in this area for the last 40 years in complete peace and harmony." In Bhim Nagar 10 to 15 houses were looted. Mostly local people were involved in attacks. In Gokul Nagar nine houses were looted and destroyed. In Haridas Nagar one house was looted. In Nanpada one Mobin Sheikh's house was looted and he was killed.

Dhobi Ally

Near Dhobi Ally is Temphi Naka Gali where a Mosque is situated. This Mosque was very badly damaged. An attempt was made to set fire to the Mosque. The electric wires were mutilated and the fan blades twisted. Copies of the Quran were burnt. When we visited the Mosque its floor was littered with broken glass and concrete pieces. At a number of places signs of burning were quite visible.

A house adjacent to the Mosque belonging to an Advocate. Mr. Ishaqe Narvel, was looted and an attempt was made to burn it. We saw the furniture in this house completely smashed and case papers belonging to Mr. Narvel's clients partially burnt. A steel cup-board in the office was completely twisted and a video set in an inside room totally smashed. Mr. Narvel told us that the damage to his property was around Rs. 2 lakhs. He also told us that many local Shiv Sainiks were involved in the attack. The peshimam's (prayer leader) house opposite to the Mosque was also demolished. These were the only Muslim houses in this area.

When we came out on Agra Road we saw Good Luck Furniture, Maharashtra Hotel, one bakery, Star Auto Works — all belonging to Muslims — were completely looted, burnt and destroyed. Further on a hardware shop belonging to Saifee T. Badshah was burnt and looted. The owner told us it was burnt on 21st May at 7.30 P.M., and his total loss was of the order of 2.25 lakhs. When we came out on the express highway we saw six garages and two timber marts completely destroyed. One auto-parts shop belonging to a Sikh gentleman situated in between these garages was also destroyed. Two trucks, a jeep and a Fiat car in the compound of the garages were also gutted. Further on we saw 4 other timber marts completely gutted. The local people informed us that all these belonged to Muslims. Behind Gokul Nagar on the Express Highway a paper godown belonging to a Muslim was totally destroyed by setting fire

to it. A Maharashtrian living behind the go-down told us that a mob of 40 persons came from outside and set fire to the godown. A Hindu house was also burnt.

Mahagiri

There are around 7,000 Muslims living here. Though there are 30 to 40 thousand Hindus living nearby, the Muslims live together in an exclusive pocket. Here also a relief camp was being run. Though an attempt was made to attack this locality, nothing much happened as the police led by Inspectors Darayas Irani and Shivaji Rao Desai behaved impartially and opened fire on the mob on 18th May at 9.30 to disperse it. Near these Muslim localities, there are a number of Kolis and Dalits living. But they did not take part in the disturbances. The residents of Mahagiri told us that Mr. Anand Dighe of Shiv Sena was the main culprit. He has close contact with the police. One police Inspector even pleaded with him to stop these riots. We were also told that Mr. Anand Dighe had obtained a list of Muslim shops from the Income-tax and Sales Tsx Departments, and had marked these shops for being burnt and looted and destroyed. A Gujarati Hindu who had partnership with a Muslim was warned to dissolve the partnership or else the shop would be looted. He had to put up a board outside the shop saying that he was no longer in partnership with the Muslim.

A resident of the relief camp, Mr. Mohammed Ismail Thekedar, told us that he had recently constructed a pucca house in Pokharan, Gandhi Nagar from the money he had received from his son in Dubai. This house was completely destroyed by the rioters and was also looted of all the articles of dowry he had collected for his two daughters. He had to flee along with his wife and children with only the clothes on their bodies. Everything else was looted. According to him, around 80 houses were looted in that area Another resident from Kapad Pawri told us that

around 20 houses belonging to Muslims were looted and destroyed.

In the Bazar area of Mahagiri a number of Muslim shops were looted and destroyed. Inside the vegetable and fruit market, Sikkandar's shop selling chickens was looted. He sustained loss of around Rs. 18,000/-. Mr. R. B. Sulaiman's shop was looted. His loss is 1.5 lakhs. Mr. Abdul Ghafur Dawood's cutlery shop was looted and burnt. He sustained a loss of Rs. 40,000/-. One Ali Mohammed Ibrahim's chappal shop just next to the police station was burnt. In all these cases, despite the repeated complaints, the police did not help. The police used to tell them arrogantly "come after your shops are burnt and looted."

BOMBAY CITY AND SUBURBS

Central Bombay

In Central Bombay a different pattern of communal violence was followed. There were hardly any mob attacks. Mostly incidents of stray stabbing were reported. There were also cases of enquiring the name of a victim and stabbing him if he happened to be a Hindu or Muslim depending on the religion of the killer. Byculla, Dongri, Pydhoni Gulalwadi etc. witnessed many such stabbing incidents. However, a mob attack was reported on Shirin building Mazagaon wherein mainly Muslims reside along with a Muslim Congress(I) MLA on 19th May. This attack on Shirin Manzil took place on 19th May after the Congress MLA Mr. Syed Ahmed residing in the building was shown on TV touring Kumbarwada along with the Chief Minister.

There are 5-6 Muslim shops along St. Mary Road in Mazagaon. The Firdos Milk Shop, a bakery and a travel agency, all belonging to Muslims were attacked and looted on 19th May. On 23rd May a perfume shop belonging to a Muslim was attacked and two workers coming out of the shop were stabbed. The shop keepers stated that they had maintained good relations with the Hindus and had often contributed money for religious festivals.

The Goldoval Temple in Nal Bazar was sought to be attacked by the Muslims coming in a procession from Bhindi Bazar on 18th May. However, the police fired and dispersed the mob. A bomb exploded near a small Shiv temple in that area on 23rd May.

The residents of Islampura nearby complained that Lalit and Arvin Dholakia, alleged to be involved in smuggling organised mob attack on them. They are also known to be financing Bal Thackeray. However, they gave ads in some evening news papers that they were not involved in organising any attack on Muslims and that they always helped Muslims.

Window-panes right upto 3rd floor level were damaged. Two Muslim workers in Mazagaon dock were stabbed to death. The hooligans either due to laxity or active collusion of the police and security personnel had entered into Mazagaon dock area wherein no one can enter without prior permission. They asked for the identity cards of workers and stabbed them if they happened to be Muslim.

There were also many incidents of stabbing in retaliation in these areas. When news of a Muslim having been stabbed came a Hindu would be stabbed or vice versa. It is very difficult to establish the exact number of dead and injured as no reliable estimate is available.

One Kamlakar Jadhav brutally murdered one Mr. Rasul who was working in India Bakery, Mazgaon Mr. Rasul was stabbed outside the bakery on 24th May. The police arrested the murderer on 13th June.

Kamathipura

It is a famous red light area of Bombay. Many smugglers and gangs operate here especially in Arab Gali. The bakery which was burnt is surrounded by Hindu shops. At about 2 minutes walk in either direction lies the Muslim majority area. According to Jalaluddin Sulaiman, the bakery owner, tension prevailed from 2-3 days before. The bakery was burnt on 18th May. Police came 3 hours later. Fire brigade was detained by rioters and not allowed to come. Cash worth Rs. 8000/- was looted from the counter. Total loss is Rs. 70 to 80 thousand. The rioters

were local. Police fired on the Muslims as they tried to put out the fire. A godown behind the bakery belonging to the same owner was also burnt. A marwari next door provided water to extinguish fire. Kadar building was attacked on 18th morning at 10 A.M. Earlier police officer Beg had refused to give permission to Muslim youths for a peace march after the Masjid was attacked by Shiv Sainiks. Attack went on till 12.30 A.M. Police is alleged to have said — "Landiyas come out." 10-20 were injured in police firing. Soda bottles were allegedly brought in by police vans. When police was phoned, they used to say "wrong number", A number of arrests took place. When arrests were being made, many women threatened to storm the police station. Mostly U.P. Muslims but all Muslims stay in the area. Riots broke out on 13th, 5th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st lane simultaneously. Arrests exceeded 20, including a 13 year old boy returning from the school. The total population is 30,000, of which Muslims number 8000 to 9000. Police got into Muslim buildings at random and arrested people from even exclusively Muslim areas (where there was no possibility of Muslims killing Muslims). Military was placed in these areas whereas riots were taking place in other areas. About Inspector Nandkumar Gokhale who was killed, Dr. Rafique Zakaria told Mrs. Gandhi that he was in Mufti and was investigating some crime & hence the killing was the work of a criminal. Mrs. Gandhi asked Patil to give a press statement to that effect. The police has arrested one Kalya Ismail on charge of murdering the sub-inspector Nandkumar Gokhale on May 18, 1984.

Parel

The area is mainly dominated by the Shiv Sena. Mainly workers and lower middle class population resides here. Not more than 500 Muslims stay here. They are mainly hawkers, or service men. A Khoja chawl is also there where small businessmen stay. The Shiv-Sena here

is mainly a goonda party and make their living by various illegal activities. During every festival they collect funds forcibly from all hawkers, businessmen and residents. This time they demanded exhorbitant amount which was impossible for these hawkers and businessmen to pay and so none of them had paid — whether Hindu or Muslim. The Shiv Sena attempted to burn a Khoja chawl, but only one house could be burnt. Similarly other muslim chawls which are surrounded by Hindu chawls were attacked from all sides with stones, huge tiles, soda bottles etc. No one was injured but the roofs and the furniture was destroyed. The miscreants were mainly from outside. Near M.D college, there are 40 garages out of which 30 belong to the Muslims. They were completely destroyed and then looted. Now to allow them to restart the garages the Shiv Sena goondas are demanding 10,000 Rs. They then come down to 5,000. If they refuse, the Shiv Sainiks ask them, after giving sword in their hand, to kill a Muslim. A gang led by one Dagdu has 40 of its members behind bars in 4 murder cases. To obtain its release, this Dagdu wants money. One muslim businessmen was threatened with his life unless he gave 1 lakh Rs. The final agreement was on 60,000. On 16th a Morcha was taken to Takia masjid and an effigy of A. R. Khan was burnt. The mosque was also attacked.

Naigaon - B.D.D. Chawl (Dadar)

This area is inhabited by mostly Dalits. There are 10-12 Muslim families living here. They had put up a small mosque for prayers. On 21st May a truck load of Shiv Sainiks came from outside and asked the Dalits to demolish the Mosque failing which they will set fire to their houses. The Muslims had already fled the area in terror. Only Pesh Imam had chosen to remain inside the Mosque.

Subsequently some Muslims reportedly from two tanks

area came and threatened the Dalits not to touch the Mosque. The Shiv Sainiks in fact wanted to create confrontation between the Muslims and Dalits. The Dalits were in a real dilema.

However, on 22nd May the Shiv Sainiks took the Pesh Imam to the nearby police station when the Congress(I) MLA Mr. Ram Mahadik was also present and compelled him to sign a statement saying that the Mosque could be demolished. The Pesh Imam signed the statement under the threat. The mosque was demolished thereafter. On 23rd May an Irani restaurant in the area was also looted. When some people contacted ACP in charge of the area for providing protection to the Muslims he is reported to have quipped. "Do they deserve protection? They construct Mosque even when they are 10-12 in number."

Mazagaon

The Mazagaon area is very large, and can be roughly divided into 4 parts. The area adjoining the railway tracks is purely cosmopolitan. There are police chawls at one end, and railway quarters at the other end. Surrounding this area there are buildings occupied by Jains, Muslims & Hindus with a few Christians and Parsis. This entire part of Mazagaon was unaffected by the riots.

Another area begins from the Lovelane Police station. This area is dominated by Jains. However, the lane on which the Khilafat house is situated faced same tension. Stray incidents of stone throwing took place on 19th May. Near the Police station itself a Car was burnt belonging to an outsider who had come for shopping.

In the area closer to the Mazagaon dock area there are Bohra chawls and BIT chawls occupied by Dalits. Here the local leaders had asked all shopkeepers and factory owners (Muslims, Hindus and Jains) to down their shutters

for fear of Shiv Sena attack. This area consists primarily of Maharashtrians. The Shiv Sena in Mazagaon Dock area is fairly strong and very aggressive. From the 17th to 19th May Shiv Sena gangs went around shops and factories to close. Those who refused were harassed. They also stoned cars and vans owned by Muslims. In front of the old British India Press building two Muslim men were stabbed and killed -- strong tension prevailed in the entire area right upto the Dockyard station. Opposite Palsar house, where some Muslims stay, a Hindu (an outsider) passer by was stabbed to death.

The fourth area beginning from the Sales Tax Office, has a large housing society of Middle-class cosmopolitan population. In this area the Shiv Sena did nothing, but at the corner of the road where Tarwadi starts opposite the Mazagaon Court, a Chahamuslim hotel was attacked In this attack, two young Muslim waiters were killed while defending the hotel. Another panshop was looted and the Muslim owner was killed. We were told that there was an old quarrel between a Shiv Sena leader and the pan-wala, the former using the cover of the riots to settle old scores.

In Tarwadi there are a few buildings in which middle class Muslims and some Christians live. The majority are Dalits and Maharashtrians, thus area being considered a stronghold of the Shiv Sena. On 19th May in the early morning at 2 A.M. a Muslim milk vendor was returning on a scooter, when the police shot him dead on ground of mere suspicion without any questioning. There have been continous fights in this area between Dalits and Shiv Sainiks Taking advantage of these situation and the curfew that was imposed in this area, Shiv Sena members sought out and killed Dalits who had opposed them. One young Dalit boy was also killed with swords. He had been ordered by some Shiv Sena members to give them 4 free cigarette pockets but he gave them only two. Taking this as an insult, the Shiv Sainiks pierced his stomach with swords and killed him. This happened on 20th May.

The entire area was put under curfew and remained tense for many days. Then there was silence. Suddenly, on June 23rd, an 18 year old boy who was cycling home from a Mosque was gheraoed by 8 Shiv Sena members and stabbed repeatedly. This boy is still in J.J. Hospital, having had 7 stiches in the front and 35 in the back. Another Muslim was also stabbed, but his fate is not known.

EASTERN SUBURBS

Kurla East (Kasaiwada)

Kasaiwada or Kureshnagar as it is officially called is situated on a hill, making it almost inacessible for any kind of attack. The total population of the nagar is somewhere around 4000. Out of which 1000 families belong to Hindu community and around 2000 families belong to the Muslim community.

A working class area it is completely dominated by Paanwalas, mechanics, workers and butchers. The houses have pucca walls. The area is extremely congested with only single road, used both for going inside and outside. Politically Janata party has its hold there.

On 20th May at midnight six people were killed in police firing in Kasaiwada, Kurla (E). Eight people were injured, 10-12 people were arrested. All of them belonged to that area. Officially it had been reported that only two persons had died. But the inhabitants of the area confirmed that the number of people killed were six and postmortem was performed on three bodies.

Around midnight a mob of 20-30 persons armed with sticks, stones and soda bottles attacked the area and retreated when the inhabitants retaliated. It is assumed that the attackers were from Nehrunagar, Kurla (E), where both BJP and Shiv Sena have offices and a large following.

A mob consisting of Shiv Sena followers from Teen Nal site attacked Kasaiwada around midnight. Before this an inspector and 3 armed constables posted there were said to have disappeared. The mob attacked with fire balls and stones. 3 rounds were also said to have been fired from Teen Nal site injuring one boy. The boy was put in a taxi to be taken to a hospital when two police vans entered into Kasaiwada. One van came from Chunabhatti and the other from Swadeshi Mill Road. It was a pincer move. The Police first fired in the air and then into the crowd. According to the people in Kasaiwada 6 persons died.

All the six dead were Muslims. Two of the dead had come from out station to visit Bombay and were living there with their relatives. The age range of all the six persons were between 20-30.

No other incidents occurred after that, though the situation remained tense even after the posting military personnel there.

Ghatkopar, Vikroli, Bhandup and Mulund

These are Eastern suburbs of Bombay and most of the major engineering industries of Bombay are located here. There are vast sprawling slums in these areas wherein live among others, the workers working in these industries. The eastern suburbs therefore have great importance as far as the Metropolitan city of Bombay is concerned. These slums located in the industrial belt were also rocked by communal riots.

Ghatkopar

Bhatwadi (now known as Barve Nagar) : Barve Nagar is located on the western side of Bombay-Agra Road, Ghatkopar. There are neatly maintained small pucca struc-

tures in rows housing displaced persons due to house collapses in different areas of Bombay. In all there are 900 families of which 125 are Muslims. There are a few Christians also. One Christian lady told us that her son Francis Paul Fernandes was severely injured by the attackers who were around 150 in number. At the same time one Muslim boy Dawood was beheaded by the miscreants. One car and a taxi belonging to Muslims were burnt. This incident took place near Rajesh Factory where Mr. Fernandes work as a watchman, on 22nd May. Also severely injured in the attack was Syed Moiuddin.

Jameelabi Jamaluddin Sheikh living in the nearby house told us that on 23rd May around 10.30 P.M. some hundred people came with swords, soda wate bottles and other missiles and attacked Muslim houses. The attack continued upto 4 A.M. One autorickshaw belonging to a Muslim family and parked outside was burnt. We saw the burnt chassis of the riskshaw lying outside. The Police did not come for their protection although a few policemen were posted nearby. They came only in the morning after the attack was over. Most of the Muslims have fled the area due to fear of attack.

Jameelabi's son who worked in a stove shop belonging to a Muslim told us that the shop was looted on 22nd May, and a person knwon to his employer who had come to help him was murdered along with his employer's son. The owner of the stove shop was severely injured. The name of the person who had come to help the owner of the stove repair shop and who was killed was Naushad, aged 20.

A Maharashtrian from the area who is a member of local Congress(I) told us that there was complete amity between Hindus and Muslims and that generally Muslim families were not harmed. He also maintained; that the police shot two Hindu boys without any reason and this enraged the Hindus in the area. He, on being questioned, said that the murders near the stove repair shop were the

result of this anger. But he could not reply when asked as to why two innocent Muslims were killed as the police had killed two Hindu boys and not Muslims. When asked about attack on Mr. Fernandes and the killing of Dawood, he maintained that it was on account of personal animosity. He also said that Dawood's brother was a bootlegger and that Dawood's murder was connected with his brother's activities. However, further enquiries did not support the coetention that there was any Muslim bootlegger in the area.

Vikhroli

Syed Ahmadali of Singhani estate situated on the border of Ghatkopar-Vikhroli told us that a Kachha Masjid located in the area was ransacked on 23rd May night at about 1.45 A.M. They broke the mike, tore copies of the holy Quran and damaged the wall and the roof. The attackers were mainly from outside. 3, 4 Muslim houses were also damaged near about the Mosque. The houses were plundered.. These are semi pucca houses. We saw the Mosque as well as these houses. Everything was removed from the houses and nothing was left.

Mr. Ahmadali who is also the president of the Mosque's committee told us that the police was informed but they refused to extend any protection saying 'we are short of hands'. Earlier the Shiv Sena Corporator had assured that nothing will happen but he disappeared alongwith his men when the attackers came. Mohammed Haroon-al-Hussain who is Inspector in BEST and lives in the area told us that there were few policemen around but they refused to do anything saying they had no orders to fire.

In the same area on Gamdevi road (Ghatkopar), Mr. M. M. Hanafi's house was completely ransacked and badly damaged. Syed Maqsood Ali's small factory was looted

Hariyali Village And Tagore Nagar

Hariyali village and Tagore Nagar are situated in Vikhroli-East near the Godrej Factory. Hariyali village is a big slum with thousands of unauthorised structures. It is also said that there are dangerous criminals in Hariyali village. In Tagore Nagar there are authorised pucca structures. There are around 35,000 Muslims out of total population of one lakh. These structures in Tagore Nagar are divided into different groups. There is a small Mosque at the corner of group No. 8. This Mosque was attacked and its Peshimam, Mohammed Abdur Rahim aged 70 was killed along with Mr. Arif Baig who had come from Madras to meet his relatives. According to Mr. Syed Saeed Jafri, Secretary Anjuman-i-Mufidul Muslimin most of the attackers who were armed with swords, soda water bottles, acid bulbs, came from the authorised structures of Tagore Nagar situated opposite Hariyali village. On Friday the 18th May at the time when most of the men were in the Mosque in group No. 3, here were only women and children in group No. 8. A mob of 100-150 persons consisting of Shiv Sainiks and anti-social elements began throwing bottles and other missiles while police was looking on. Mr. Jafri told us that when some of the residents threw brickbats (he pointed out two stack of bricks which were lying there for construction, saying that incidentally these bricks become handy for us in self defence as there was nothing else available) in self defence, the police started firing at them. "One police constable named Yadav even shouted 'I am Shiv Sainik' and fired at us. We had not feared any attack and we were living with our Hindu neighbours in peace" The Muslim women from group No. 8, also bitterly complained about the role of the police and the nightmare through which they had to pass on that night.

Mr. Jafri also pointed out that the police has arrested 16 Muslims on charge of attempt to murder. He said that the South Indians and Dalits did not take part in the attack and some of them assured the muslims of their help. He

also said that the attack was planned in the office of one old BJP leader of the area. The local MLA Mr. Sherale belonging to Congress (I) also did not come to their rescue, and nor did the Congress (I) councillor Mrs. Pramila Bachao prove of any help. However, no houses were looted in this area.

Bhandup

Tembhipada

This is an interior sulm on the western side of Bhandup. Shaikh Khairuddin, a resident of this area told us that there are only 5-6 Muslim houses in this locality. All other Muslims have fled from that area. The Muslim families living here are extremely poor. We saw all these houses very badly damaged and looted. Khairuddin, a labour in the docks, was even afraid of showing other houses. We saw the gutted house of Ladkhan Momin, a worker in CEAT tyres. Everything was looted from inside. Habib Sattar, a toilor from Hyderabad, also lost all his belongings including two sewing machines which were his only means of livelihood. Not even a tumbler or a spoon was left. We could see nothing but bare walls. His neighbour Prasad Rao from Karnataka told us that the attackers armed with swords, bottles and acid bulbs came from outside on the night of 21st May. Even his house was hit by missiles. Fortunately the Muslims had fled otherwise some of them would have been killed. He said no local resident took part in the attack. We also saw a bakery belonging to a U.P. Muslim Mr. Sanaullah situated on St. Antony Church Road, Tembhipada having been damaged and looted. Sanaullah s brother told us that it was attacked once before in 1970 also. It was the only Muslim bakery in the area. The bakery owner's brother also told us that the police came only 1½ hour after the attackers left. A timber mart nearby was burnt. There was another timber mart adjacent

to it which formerly belonged to a Hindu (but now purchased by a Muslim and still carrying the name board of the previous Hindu owner) was spared. Besides these, there were no other Muslim shops in the area.

Subhash Nagar

This is a famous slum on the eastern side of Bombay-Agra Road, near the CEAT Tyre factory. There are 20 to 25 Muslim houses in this hutment colony. There is a small Mosque catering to the Muslims in this area. The Peshimam of the mosque (prayer leader) a blind man aged 70 was murdered along with a young Muslim man who had gone to pray there. This happened on 18th May at about 8 P.M. when both were returning from the Mosque after 'namaz'.

A constable on duty in the area told us that the Peshlmam was a good person and was quite innocent, but that the other Muslim killed, Ashik Ali, had a personal rivalry with some other workers of CEAT Tyres in the area. However, this was strongly refuted by the mother of Ashik Ali. We met his mother in a relief camp at Ghebain Shah Dargah compound in Mulund. She is an old lady. She began to cry while talking to us and told us "my son had no rivalry with anyone, nor did he drink. He was offering Namaz regularly. He was killed while returning from the Mosque. He was threatened in the afternoon on the same day and when we complained to the police we were turned away. He was the only earning member in the family and has a wife and six children. What will we do now, where will we go?" After these murders other Muslims fled from Subhash Nagar. There was no one when we visited the area.

Pathan Colony & Hanuman Nagar

This is another vast sprawling slum on the western side of Bombay-Agra road behind Mangatram Petrol Pump.

This was another trouble spot during the riots. We met a number of Muslims of Pathan Colony inside Jameel Nagar Mosque. One of the spokesmen, who is also an active worker of Congress (I) spoke to us. He said that in Pathan colony, Jameel Nagar and Hanuman Nagar all put together there are about 15,000 Muslims, out of the total population of 18,000 in the area.

According to him, the Muslims of Pathan colony never took any offensive but they were determined to fight back, if attacked. "We have decided not to die a coward's death. We will kill attackers before we are killed. However, we have been living in peace and harmony with our Hindu neigrbours."

"We were attacked on the night of 18th May at 1.30 A.M. Madarsa Zahural Islam was first attacked. When we came to know about it, we informed the police. They had tried to set fire to Madarsa. But this attempt was foiled and some of our persons put off the fire. Earlier, a Shiv Sena leader from the area had assured us that no harm will come to the Muslims. We had even formed a peace committee. All important persons from the area including the Shiv Sainik were taken on the peace committee. Despite all these attempts, the Muslims were attalked on 18th May at 1.30 A.M. 8 shops and houses were looted and damaged. The role of the police was highly partisan. Sub-Inspector Shinde even told us, "are you still not satisfied after creation of Pakistan? We will not let you have another Pakistan." The police dragged out innocent Muslims from their houses, beat them up and arrested 52 of them. The police arrested even Mr. Azimullah Shah who is Special Executive Magistrate. Sub-Inspector Shinde even threatened to open fire but DSP, Thorat did not allow him to do so. The arrested Muslims were got released with great difficulty. Some Shiv Sainiks allegedly murdered a 24 years' old man by throwing a big stone on him near Jama Masjid Kabrastan. However, much damage was not done in the Pathan Colony area, where there is a concentrated popula-

tion of Muslims. But in Hanumanwadi up the hill, there are scattered Muslim houses and shops. All these houses were attacked, damaged and looted. The Muslim League President Mr. I. M. Patel's house on the far end of Hanumanwadi was badly damaged and totally looted. In the same area a timber mart belonging to Mr. Rafiq was completely gutted. We saw the houses belonging to Taher Kazi and Afsar Basha having been destroyed and looted. We also saw two meat shops and a tailor shop all belonging to Muslims having been looted. We were told that a Muslim girl aged 15 years daughter of one Mr. Syed is still missing. Most of the Muslims from Hanumanwadi area had fled and some of them had taken refuge in Muslim houses in the Pathan colony area.

We met one active member of Datta Samant's union Mr. Batkar and asked him about the incidents in the area. He told us that two years ago one Mishra was murdered by three notorious goondas, Nasir, Taher & Edwin. Mishra was a popular person in the area and so his death aroused anger. All three murderers were released on bail, after which they began threatening people in the area so that no one would give evidence against them. This had built up tension and was one of the reasons of the recent riots in Pathan colony area. However, he considered that it is only Muslims who suffered in these riots. We were also informed by the Muslims in the area that by and large South Indians, Bhaiyyas from U.P. and Dalits remained neutral.

Mulund

Mulund is the place where the limit of greater Bombay Municipal Corporation ends. This is another important eastern iduustrial suburb with a large population of Gujarati Hindus and South Indians. The Muslim population is scattered. They are extremely poor and generally live in different slums in the area. However, there are

few timber marts and other business establishments belonging to Muslims in Mulund.

Mrs. Trivedi, wife of the Congress(I) ML.A. from the area accompanied & showed us Muslim shops and huts gutted, looted and destroyed. Near Chanta dairy farm seven timber shops belonging to Muslims were burnt. One Muslim youth in Sindhi colony was murdered during the riots.

In Sonapur Muslim huts were attacked and the residents fled in terror. Some of these houses were damaged. In Keshavpada one bhangar shop (waste material) and few houses belonging to Muslims were burnt. Opposite Ramgarh, basti, a Dargah and some Musilm houses were damaged. Some Muslim houses near HOECHST Pharmaceutical Company were burnt. Needless to say, Muslims from all these areas had fled in terror and no one was around when we visited these places.

There was, however, a bright spot in Amar Nagar with a mixed Hindu-Muslim population. Nothing happened here as the Hindus and Muslims decided to jointly defend themselves and ward off any trouble from outside. Thus they successfully kept the outside mob away.

There we visited the Ghaiban Shah Dargah compound on the top of a hillock. There is a big relief camp here. It is known as Khindypada Relief Camp. Muslims from Thane, Mulund, Bhiwandi etc. have taken refuge here. Along the slope of the hill there is a big slum housing 15,000 people. Among them there are 50-60 Muslim houses. Here too, Hindus and Muslims formed a joint committee and kept the trouble makers away. However, according to one inmate of the camp one bakery belonging to a Muslim near Khindipada was set ablaze. We were told that near Chanta Dairy farm, while attempting to set one Muslim timber mart ablaze and a Hindu was killed in police firing. A lady from the relief camp told us that in Indira Nagar, Mulund 4 persons were killed in the Masjid while praying.

She saw this with her own eyes. However, Mrs. Trivedi maintained that they were injured and not killed. But the above referred lady insisted that they were killed and she actually saw the heads roll away from the bodies. Gul Mohammed, a Congress (I) worker, informed us that in Indira Nagar one Gujarati builder had hired goondas to destroy the huts situated on the land, taking advantage of the situation. However, he refused to divulge the name of the builder.

Govandi

Govandi was another major trouble spot during the communal riots in Bombay. Govandi is a vast sprawling slum area in North-East suburb of Bombay. It consists of different localities like Shivaji Nagar, Tata Nagar, Bainganwadi etc. In these areas live the poorest of the poor of Bombay. In Govandi is situated the biggest slaughter house in Asia. A large number of Muslims depend for their livelihood on this slaughter house and many of them live around it. A large number of working class people, petty hawkers, domestic servants and others also live in these areas. In Shivaji Nagar, there are around 60% Muslims and 40% Hindus. Of the 40% Hindus, around 25% are Maharashtrians and 15% non-Maharashtrians. According to Sheikh Abdul Aziz Kadri, an industrial worker, the clashes were mainly between Muslims and Maharashtrians. Other Hindus remained, by and large, neutral. The non-Maharashtrians are mainly from the South and from U.P. Syed Abdul Jabbar, another worker, said that the Shiv Sena office in the area was the centre of all activities during the riots. Most of the attackers were mobilised from outside Govandi. However, many local people also participated The Shiv Sena office displayed a board near its premise on which it was written "Muslims are not loyal to this country" and "Quran Chhodo Ya Hindustan Chhodo".

Shiv Sena gave a call for bandh on 18th May, and people pulled down shutters of their shops out of fear. On 18th morning a sword procession was also taken out. The Muslims of Govandi were particularly annoyed by what was written on the black board, and they attacked the Shiv Sena office and removed the black board. The furniture of the Shiv Sena office was damaged in this attack. One Sarad Achariya is the Shiv Sena counseller from this area. Sarad Achariya complained to the police about the attack and said that "we will take revenge". Mr. Hashu Adwani of the BJP toured the area and appealed for peace. However, the area was soon to be rocked with communal violence.

The Muslims of Shivaji Nagar also said that in first week of May RSS camp was held in a school compound in Chembur. The real trouble began after Friday prayers on 18th May. Stones were thrown in Shivaji Nagar and Bainganwadi. Also used as missiles were soda water bottles, tube lights and acid bulbs. The Muslims alleged that the police was actively supporting Shiv Sena rioters. Mr. Vasant Salunke, the Shakha Pramukh was organising the attacks. Many people were beaten up by police in his presence. It was also alleged by the Muslims of the area, that in the evening of 18th May a meeting took place at Ghatla village where the Shiv Sena and RSS members planned further action. It was also observed that the RSS activists used to go around on bicycle in the early hours of the morning for two to three days continuously.

Shivaji Nagar has been divided into different plots and lands. And there is a vacant plot between two plots. The police and the Shiv Sena activities used to operate from these lands. Any one who came to the rescue of the Muslims was fired upon by the police from these lands. The Muslims would have suffered much greater losses, according to the residents, had the Military not taken over. It was also alleged by the Muslims that many of the miscreants wore police uniforms to beat up and terrorise Muslims. Some of them were caught by the Military jawans and handed over to the police.

In one of the most brutal police firings on 18th May evening the following persons were killed. (1) Rashid Ahmed (52 years old), an Arab from Baharain (2) Mohammed Yakub (45 years old) from plot No. 10 (3) Unknown person from plot No. 13. The disturbances continued upto 22nd May when the military took over.

Mr. Abdul Latif Sheikh, Abdul Mannan, Sheikh Ahmed Mujib, Abdul Shakur workers from Metal Base Company — complained that when they went to work to the factory where they have been working for more than 15 years, they were threatened by some Shiv Sena workers inside the premises of the factory and told not to report for duty if they cared for their lives. One of them was weilding a sword and actually put the sword on the neck of Abdul Latif. Other workers present in the factory compound just looked on and did not come to their rescue. This incident took place on 28th May.

The attack on Tata Nagar, another area in Govndi, took place on 19th May at night. The Mosque was stoned heavily and many huts were looted. There are a number of Dalits living in this area but they did not join the attack. Some of them even helped the Muslims and assured them that they would protect them. Most of the attackers came from Deonarpada & Agarwadi. It seems some notorious character from amongst Muslims had also prepared for attack, but ran away when Shiv Sena launched the attack. We could not assess the exact damage to the properties belonging to Muslims, although a few were attacked and looted. There was no loss of life in Tata Nagar. The police arrested around 38 persons of which 36 are Muslims and 2 are Hindus. One Mohammed Ayyub and his mother were injured with swords and one Abdus Samad Inayatullah was hit with a bullet.

Bainganwadi

Bainganwadi is another big slum in Govandi

Its estimated population is around 50,000 of which 15% are Muslims. Most of the residents of Bainganwadi are people who have been uprooted from different areas of Bombay and made to settle here. A large number of Muslims dishoused from Bandra have settled in Bainganwadi on a plot which is now known as Bandra plot. According to Dr. Ansari, a medical practitioner from Bainganwadi, the Muslims of Bandra plot show an amazing bond of unity and solidarity. They always stand united vis-a-vis others including Muslims from other areas. This unity among Bandra Muslims has often caused many problems. Earlier, there was fight between the police and the Bandra plot Muslims on the question of construction of a Mosque. Ultimately the Bandra plot Muslims prevailed. The police was, therefore, quite hostile towards the Bandra plot Muslims.

A portion of the Bainganwadi where poorest Muslims, many of them beggers, used to live was attacked and completely demolished. All the residents fled in terror and nobody was seen around when we visited the area. In Bainganwadi there are many dangerous anti-social characters, some of them notorious bootleggers. One Balkrishna, a bootlegger, is associated with Shiv Sena. Two brokers Sulaiman and Haria are involved in many deals involving sale of hutments and these brokers had a strained relation with Balkrishna. Also, there are many Muslim autorickshaw drivers in Bainganwadi who had taken part in attacking the Shiv Sena office on 18th May.

In one of the areas of Bainganwadi some Muslims were allotted hutments and between them and the earlier residents there were frequent clashes for water. One of the Muslim woman from this area told us that they were not allowed to fetch water and that they were often abused. These clashes for water were between Muslims and Dalits. All these put together constituted communal inbroglio ready to explode anytime.

Most of the houses looted and demolished belonged to Muslims. Nothing was left. The Dalits in this area made a common cause with Shiv Sena in attacking Muslims huts. The Dalits on being questioned said that "the Muslim boys in the opposite lane abused us and hurled stones at our houses." One old Dalit woman showed a mark of injury on her hand, saying that she was hit by a stone thrown by the Muslim youth. They also maintained that the Buddha Mandir was also hit. The Dalits also said that "the Muslims shouted "Allah Ho Akbar" whole night and created fear amongst us."

However, the Muslims maintained that they shouted "Allah Ho Akbar" not with an aggressive design on others, but to keep out their own fear. They also refuted the allegation that they indulged in stone throwing. It was the work of some outside miscreants, they maintained. The Musims also alleged that many hooligans were brought from places as far away as Worli. They used to rest during the day and create trouble at night. Some of them were rounded up by the police. This led to further tension in the area. The Military took over on Monday i.e. 21st May and restored peace. But when it was withdrawn on 23rd at 4 A.M.,, the huts were burnt down barely half an hour later. The Muslims alleged that the decision to withdraw Military was known to Shiv Sena people before. Otherwise it would not have been possible to organise burning of huts within half an hour. In all 5 persons were killed in the police firing and more than 10 persons sustained stab injuries.

Cheetah Camp

Cheetah Camp is a very large slum situated near Bombay. It has a considerable Muslim population. There are 11,000 huts with roughly 55,000 residents at the rate of 5 member per dwelling. 80% of the population are South Indian Muslims, mostly from Kerala. There are 122 Catho-

lic families, the remaining are Hindus. Field enquiry shows that the Cheetah Camp has never known communal strife. However, Cheetah Camp itself was conceived in act of violence. In 1976, at the height of the emergency, Janata Colony, a large slum near the BARC was razed to the ground with bull dozers. The residents were forcibly transferred to a bare stretch of ground on the edge of a marsh, devoid of any municipal facilities. That was how Cheetah Camp came into existence. The people had to start their lives anew right from scratch, and through a relentless struggle against the police and the municipal corporation, have inch by inch, succeeded in forcing the authorities to grant them basic municipal facilities like drinking water, lights, roads and drains. Since they cannot claim these as a matter of right, they can be deprived of them at any time.

Consequently, to the residents of Cheetah Camp, the most concrete manifestation of public authority has always been the police.. The history of the slum for the last 8 years has been one of repeated encounters with the police.

The vast majority of the residents, about 86%, make a living from odd jobs and sub-contracts from readymade garment manufacturers and plastic bauble workshops, or zari embroidery. A minority have taken to earning a living from crime-ranging from housebreaking to bootlegging and strikebreaking; on hire as mercenaries. Cheetah camp has its quota of criminal gangs. There is no political leadership and no strong representation of any political party in the area. Some parties maintained a token presence and embroil themselves into gang wars, providing political asylum to these rival gangs.

Beyond a certain point, it is difficut for a crime gang to grow without political patronage which is crucial in terms of getting gang members released from lock-ups, or in getting the police to look the other way, that is, in legitimising corruption and organised crime. In the present

context, it is interesting that one such gang, comprised entirely of Muslims, constituted itself as a local shakha of the Shiv Sena and was dissolved only a few days before the police attack.

According to the residents in the sectors from which the members of this gang are drawn, Lambu Halim's outfit emerged in the wake of the decline of one of Cheetah Camp's dadas, Raj Mohammed. A few years ago, Mohammed is believed to have led one of the most powerful crime gangs in the Bombay Docks. His clout has now been whittled down and circumscribed by a number of cases filed against him.

Lambu Halim's gang, although a fast rising one, was faced with a lack of political patronage, since other rival gangs in the slum had already won the sympathises of the Congress-I and the Janata Party. The new gang turned to the Shiv Sena.

A respected Muslim social worker and the president of a masjid in the slum, refused to be enrolled, for reasons of his own, while continuing to pledge his support to Patel (a Shiv Sena activist). He, however, imposed one condition — that the new shakha must not include a single criminal on its rolls. He kept away from the group thereafter, the social worker told this reporter, when he discovered that the new committee including the president was virtually a crime gang. Lambu Halim was, for all practical purposes, the pramukh.

The Muslim Shiv Sainiks set up office in Jehangiria Hotel, an eating place that had closed down.

Following the well-established Sena tradition, the gang now began extorting hush money from shop keepers in their sector. For a price, they also undertook to get anyone who was arrested by the Trombay police, released. As is the customs with the other crime bosses, Halim flaunted his links

with the Trombay police. A constable or two at the Shiv Sena office, which stayed open till late at night, was a familiar sight.

In collusion with the Trombay police, this gang is credited with having got Munna, a gangster from that sector, released on bail. Subsequently, in the wake of differences with him, the residents including Munna's wife believe that at their behest Munna was dragged out of his house and shot dead by tae police in cold blood. Munna's funeral, drew a crowd of about a thousand, the first indication of public against the Shiv Sena gang. Munna was liked because, unlike the others, he never victimised any of the slum dwellers.

In the wake of the riots in Bhiwandi, however, Lambu Halim's gang was trapped in an impossible situation which could have provoked the wrath of the slum against the gang. As one resident put it, "suddenly there was no one in Cheetah camp who was more anti-Shiv Sena, than Halim himself. "He tore down the Shiv Sena board with his own hands, and took down the flag.

According to some of the residents, Halim may then well have overreacted, in order to clear himself in the eyes of the Camp. Some reports have it that he took the lead in organising the defence of the largely Muslim populated slum from any outside attack by the Shiv Sena. A curious rumour. for instance, was now in the air that the residents of Koligaon, a small community of fisherman, were planning an attack on Cheetah Camp. Given the size of that community, such a possibility seemed ludicrous.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the riots in Bhiwandi, Cheetah Camp was tense for days, apprehending an attack at any moment. There were instances of visitors to the slum being harassed or beaten up on suspicion as spies. Most of the residents stayed awake at night, and large mobs swept through the slum, from end to end, at any hint of trouble.

One of the residents remembers three miscreants from the slum one night throwing 3 fire bombs at an adjoining Maharashtrian colony, called Custom chawl. Fortunately the bombs only produced a blast but no fire, and resulted in the Trombay police posting small group of constables in the colony.

On the morning of 23rd May, Wednesday, the elders of Koligaon approached the leaders of Cheetah Camp for a pact to ensure mutual peace. Accordingly, some 20 elders from sectors all over the camp attended a meeting which included representatives from Palipada, an adjoining colony. In reciprocation the leaders of Koligaon came to Cheetah Camp at about 3 in the afternoon, to seal the pact in good faith. The peace discussions were held at the initiative of the BJP MLA Hashu Advani, who himself led the delegation to Cheetah Camp.

A little earlier, the residents at one corner of the slum, adjoining a marsh and directly across from the corner next to the police station, saw some huts burning near Mankhurd station. Soon there were rumours of an impending attack — the Shiv Sena was on its way, with slum huts burning in its wake.

Provoked by the rumours, a gang of about 100 persons from the sectors in this corner where Lambu Halim's Shakha was located, took path along the marsh towards Mankhurd, to pre-empt any attack on the slum. They found no one and as they were returning, they found their way back to the slum cut-off by the police, who according to the residentts, opened fire on the mob.

According to one of the volunteers in the mob, they broke and ran in all directions as the bullets flew. There was no way in which, (as the police to were to allege later) they could have stoned or attacked the police station which was situated at the other corner of the slum.

Abdul Kutty's handwriting was like a schoolboy's. Each letter was sharp and clear, each word. He made no mistakes at all — perhaps because his Hindi was so polite and mannered. He sat at the foot of the stairs, writing to a friend in Dubai. It was about 3.15 in the afternoon.

"By the grace of God, I hope you are well. I can't tell you how happy I was to receive your letter. You must write more often, even if by some change, my letter is delayed in the post. But first, tell me, how are things with you? Do you know that you are now an uncle...?"

It was less than a year that he was married. Fair, clean-featured, with clear light-coloured eyes, Adbul Kutty was a handsome young man. His hair came down to his collar. He had on the dark brown cotton jacket he always wore. Somewhere in the other room, his 18 year old wife was resting with their new-born child, only 12 days old.

The door to their single-storeyed house was wide open. Theirs' was one of the few pucca structures in all of Cheetah camp. It stood on one of the main roads that ran down the length of the slum. The Kutty's had a Zari workshop of their own, where Abdul worked. His father Mohammed Kutty sat on the floor beside him looking out of the door talking.

"It was at that point" Mohammed Kutty says "that I heard the shots and the cries and saw the police come running down the road. There was trouble. Immediately, I shut and bolted the door, and sent Abdul upstairs.

They kicked the door open, ran up the stairs, and dragged Abdul down. Three policemen stood around me. I felt their bayonets prick my ribs. If I had so much as breathed, I would have been dead.

" 'Keep your mouth shut', they said, as they took Abdul out onto the road. With one blow they had his head open.

Abdul fell. They shot him four times in the chest, then they dragged him further down the road. One of the constables pushed his head into the gutter with his foot, and said drink. He shook his head. He had asked for water They shot him twice more and he died."

"You can see how they shot him from his jacket," his father says, "stiff and dusty with dried blood, there are holes in the waist, in the chest, and in the sleeves." Mohammed Kutty holds out the letter pad Abdul used. It ends with an unfinished sentence, the last words he wrote to his friend. "Do you know that you are now an uncle? At 11-45 on the night of the 12th, my son was born".

Abdul Kutty was never charged with any offence, or ever arrested in his life. "Why should he be?" his father asks. "The tragedy is not ours alone", his father says, "It's the same all over Cheetah Camp. No one knows why their sons or brothers were dragged out of their houses, beaten up or shot dead that Wednesday afternoon, by the police."

It was the same on both sides of the road in the sectors at one edge of the slum that borders a marshy strip Doors kicked open, the women threatened with bayonets, the men dragged out, beaten mercilessly with rifle butts and lathis.

Mohammed Yusuf, 26, who ran out of his hut because he was told that Abdul Sattar his younger brother, had returned after years to live with him again, had been caught by the police. He could find his brother nowhere, till near the marsh, outside the slum, he found him dead. He had been beaten up, dragged away, and shot dead. A watch repairer, Abul Sattar has four children; the eldest is 7 years old, the youngest, 9 months.

Mohammed Yakkub, 56, beaten on the back with rifle butts, saw his son Hanif fall under the blows A constable

shouted to him to turn over on his back. "At this point, Hanif's mother screamed 'what are you doing?" Caught in the act, the constable checked himself. He was about to shoot him in the back. "Hanif was saved, but Rafique his brother was dead, shot in a zari workshop where he worked." Hanif was arrested and released only a week later, on a bond of Rs. 2000.

Abdul Rehman, 35, was asleep when he was woken up by the shots and the cries. At the other end of the row of huts that gives onto the main road, he saw his wife Hajira Bi slumped on the ground. 'I thought she was unconscious and tried to pick her up. 'Get away', a police-man shouted, with his gun on me, 'or I'll shoot you too'. When I went to her later, she was dead"

Hajira Bi had looked out onto the road when a man standing beside her pulled her into the lane. They were both found dead, shot by the same bullet. The tin walls of the hut they stood next to are pierced by the two bullets that missed them. No one knows the name of the man who tried to save Hajira Bi's life. He was not a resi-dent of Cheetah Camp, having come in from Madras only a day or two earlier to see off a relative who was going abroad.

Hajira Bi herself had come back on a trip home from Kuwait. When her husband went to get her body, he found her money and her jewellery worth about Rs. 2000 gone.

In a hut across the road, Fatima Bi sits as she has for days, with her one and a half year old daughter in her lap, looking at nothing. Her slender young face seems bled white, her long hair falls in curls about her shoulders. Her 22 year old husband, Mohammed Ibrahim, had been missing for two days. All she knew was that the police had beaten him a lot. With the other women whose men had been locked up, she went to the chowki with some food for him. She couldn't find him. "Why don't you go to

Cooper Hospital with a photograph of him?" a constable told her. She found him in the morgue, but they wouldn't give her the body without his "clothes number". She had to make three trips, and finally, she buried him at Santacruz. No one could tell her how he died, till she met a dudhwalla at Cheetah Camp who told her what he saw — "He was shot dead by the police."

The Official figure put out by the police claimed 8 deaths in the firing, the residents believe the actual number would be closer to 13. Bodies with bullet wounds were discovered a day or two later, and there are reports of men still missing. No one knows whether they have been arrested or killed — their bodies trapped in the marsh adjoining the slum.

At least 157 men were arrested — 99 per cent of whom were taken from their homes, and charged with rioting. As a social worker who runs a dispensary in the slum puts it "they needed a mob to justify the fact that they had fired and killed people without provocation. So a mob had to be got from somewhere. They had to break into the houses and drag people out."

Immediatey following the firing, the police claimed that the Trombay police station had been attacked by a mob armed with soda water bottles, stones & swords — and that they had fired in self-defence. Curiously enough however, there is not a trace of violence — the station stands inviolate without so much as a blemish on its whitewash; its delicate asbestos roof is intact. In further justification of the crime, those arrested had to be charged with rioting, so that more than a week after the Commissioner of Police Julio Ribeiro and Mrs. Lalita Rao the guardian minister for the city began to hint at police excesses, they cannot be released although innocent. The judicial process once set in motion, has to run its course. Only 14 per cent of the residents of Cheetah Camp hold permanent jobs in the organized sector. The vast majority work in the unorga-

nized sector, eking out a living from temporary jobs These people have now had to somehow raise Rs. 2000 to get their brothers or sons released on bail.

The agony of Cheetah Camp has not ended. More than a week after the attack by the police, a large number of men and boys, who cannot be released on bail, continue to be kept in custody — in jails at Ghatkopar, Nasik and Pune. Their families, in the meantime, have to depend on scant and infrequent relief rations — half a loaf of sliced bread; a few handfuls of foodgrains.

Among those arrested were three women — Swami Antoniamma, Durga Naidu, and Mumtaz Begum. Mumtaz, an 18 year old girl, married just nine months, lies on a tin cot in a dark hot slum hut divided into two. She gestures to her relatives to stop talking, and motions to this reporter to come and sit beside her. It is important to her that the events be clearly and fully narrated. Mumtaz can speak only two or three words at a time, wincing and breathless with pain. She was shot in the leg.

"When I heard them shouting and banging to the other doors, my first thought was for my sister's baby, who was playing on the doorstep. I stepped out to grab the child and lock the door. I had one foot out on the step, the child with me inside the hut, when they fired, as I was about to step in. They got me in the leg, and when I fell, they came and took me away.

"I was arrested at 3.30 P.M. It was not until nine O' clock that night, that they took me to the Sion Hospital : I've lost a lot of blood. They operated upon my leg, and got the bullet out, but they didn't give me a single transfusion. I feel drained.

"At 4.30 in the morning, they brought me back to the police station, without food or water. My sister brought me some food, but she was turned away. At six that even-

ing, they told me to get into the van — they were taking me to Rajwadi hospital, they said. Instead they took me to the Boiwada jail.

"I couldn't move. That night, I had fits and fever. The women jailors spread out my sheets and laid me down. After 7 days, when my brother-in-law could raise enough money for the bond — Rs. 2000 — they let me go. My sister has also been arrested, I don't know where she is All I remember is the way they beat her. We are very poor you know. I don't know how we are going to cope with this".

Mumtaz's husband left recently for a job in the Gulf. The couple do not own a hut of their own, and live with her sister. Her brother-in-law who supports them works at a plastic sweatshop in Ghatkopar. "I've studied upto PUC" (pre-university course) Mumtaz said. "I don't mind writing to the authorities, to the prime minister, to ask under what law the police can simply kill poor people like this".

It is hardly surprising that a few days after the event, most of the victims should now believe that the police stopped only when the army arrived on the scene, although in actual fact, the military arrived several hours after the attack. At the moment, the presence of the army is to them almost a guarantee of their lives. A letter addressed to the major in command of the troops by the president of a masjid in the slum, pleads that the army stay on at least for the duration of Ramzaan. They have absolutely no faith in the police. "It is the army that saved us".

What cannot be explained is the movement of the police thereafter. The police went down the main roads and the lanes deep into the slum, into sectors at the middle and the far end of the marsh, as both the bullet marks, some of the deaths and the arrests indicate. Besides, once the

returning mob had been dispersed, there was no justification whatsoever for any further action.

In an attempt to find answers, some of the victims think it significant that the attack was focussed where the new Shiv Sena shakha was located. The inspectors known to be closest to this gang, they point out, led the attack on the slum, namely, Soni, Shinde and D'Souza. The attack they argue, may have been in retaliation for the branch being closed, since it threatened a large loss of income and power. The Trombay police station, they allege has always been able to draw upon a vast amount of illegal earnings from Cheetah Camp and the neighbouring slums.

Some of the residents also point out bitterly, that none of the crime lords or gang members are among the 157 arrested by the police. Following the attack on the slum, Lambu Halim himself is absconding with his family, and is reportedly in Poona.

There is no way in which the victims can live with the fact of what has been done to them, no way in which they can recover a sense of balance. 'Why' is a question that hurts even more than the wounds and the loss. How does one come to terms with violence unleashed totally without reason? Some explanation is vital if they are to be able to cope with the consequences, with their wounds and their deaths. Completely defenceless against the memory of that afternoon, they are reduced to blind terror.

On Thursday morning, the day after when Mrs. Lalita Rao, cabinet minister drove into the slum, she found the huts rigid and tense with fear, the doors locked. She came in a white Ambassador, with a police pilot jeep carrying two constables. No one dared come out. "We thought the police had returned".

There are no reasons. Neither the minister nor the police commissioner have yet been able to come out with a public statement — only vague comments on police excesses Worse, instead of a full account, Lalita Rao seems above all concerned to clear her own name recalling earlier instances of vague complaints she had made against certain inspectors who were "Harassing" the slum dwellers. She has called for the transfer of the inspector in charge of the station, for "failure to handle the situation adequately". Meanwhile some youth Congress-I leaders from the slum have accused her of being actually responsible for the violence, — the police, they allege, having attacked at her instance and Lalita Rao has in return, questioned their credentials as Congress-I workers.

In the circumstances, looking for answers, it is hardly surprising that the victims should be left only with the blunt impression of sheer hatred — that the police did what they did to them simply because they were Muslims. In the popular impression, the Shiv Sena and the police are identified — it is the only way in which the victims can make any sense of the violence. Searching for some straw, some reason, all that they have as a clue are what the police said as they attacked. In the popular account the police said . "so you want to fight with the Shiv Sena? Take us on instead. We are khakhi without, but saffron within". An image instead of an answer, that the complex violence in the city, seething with diverse political and economic interests, has been reduced to. In the absence of answers, it becomes to them almost a symbol of their fate, of a minority cornered, with all forces ranged against them. But it is not an anwer, and it satisfies no one.

The attack on Cheetah Camp above all highlights the insiduous and complex nature of violence in Bombay. If anything, it is clear from Cheetah Camp that the killings can occur for anything but communal reasons, a climate that effectively conceals the real interests. In compensa-

tion, some of the elders of Cheetah Camp have called for the immediate transfer and the prosecution of the policemen responsible for the cold-blooded killings and for the immediate and unconfidant release of all those arrested. While these steps are undoubtedly necessary, they do not in any sense constitute an answer. Yet the reasons have to be discovered if the victims are to be able to protect themselves and to live with their loss, and above all, if communalism is not to be the answer.

Behrampada - Bandra (East)

It is a slum area with mixed population. Near the station Kherwadi runs through a bazar where all marwari & Muslim shops and South Indians hotels are situated. Behram Nagar is within Kherwadi. The whole land belongs partly to the railways and partly to the Collector where plots were allotted by the Government. There are illegal structures belonging to the Hindus. The population of the area is 25,000-30,000. 80% are Muslims. Occupations are mostly hawkers, Taxi/Rickshaw drivers, business or employed in factories.

According to one Vishnu Sarfare, Muslims gathered but did not attack They threw stones on closed shops (of Hindus & Muslims) and damaged name plates of the shops. In fact they requested Hindu women to go from the other path as tension prevailed there.

The Peace committee Secretary told us that the rioters were policemen themselves. According to him, the Congress(I) M.L.A. of the area Meghji Chheda — did not come for 3 days. Riots started when Shiv Sena gave a call for a bandh but a few shops did not close down. Shiv Sainiks came and asked them to close down. Meanwhile people gathered and the Shiv Sena had to retreat. This happened on 19th May. Again they came in at 1-30 P.M. and were

again forced to retreat. Then in the evening they came in a big mob accompanied by police and Shiv Sainiks as well as police surrounded the entire area. Police opened fire without reason or warning, and, shot straight on bodies instead of on legs. 8 died in the firing & 12were injured. One Mr. G. K. Habibi told us that two persons in the Government colony also stabbed. There were 65 arrests — all Muslims. The police have been alleged to say that "we are Thackeray's men — come out landiyas." When the Peace Committee was formed by the M.L.A., the Shiv Sena also was included. In the first meeting itself abusive language was used by Shiv Sena leader Madhukar Sarpotdar. He is alleged to have been sitting with police officers daily after 7 P.M. in the police station. Madhukar Sarpotdar had lost elections 3 times in that area, and hence he wants to admit Maharashtrian population in the new structures. Near Kalamandir — a cinema theatre — a bakery known as Rajdhani & a Muslim hotel belonging to Mr. Parkar were looted and burnt.

Editor's Note

Fresh violence broke out in some parts of the city on 20-6-1984. *The Kherwadi area in Bandra East was worst affected. Ultimately army had to be called out to assist the police in this area on 25th June,* 1984. *We are giving below a report of what happened in Kherwadi in the second phase of communal violence. This is reproduction from Sunday Observer, dated 24th June,* 1984.

Tension in City

The Sunday Observer, 24-6-1984

In spite of heavy police bandobast round-the-clock in Bandra (East), the pockets around Behrampada, Bharat Nagar and Jawahar Nagar continue to remain tense. The

police, reports UNI, said that no untoward incidents were reported after the night curfew was lifted this morning, and that the situation was normal.

Night curfew was clamped in Kherwadi following continued violence in the area since the evening of 20th, in which one person was reported to have died, and 29 injured. In the last two days, three more persons have been reported killed according to Kherwadi police.

This correspondent found that even today there were cases of stabbing and looting in Kherwadi. Habib Fakih, the special executive magistrate of Government colony Bandra (East) and joint secretary of the minority cell of BRCC(I) was hit on the right hand by four assailants at around 9.30 a.m. today, as he was coming out of bank. This bank is just a stone's throw from the police station. Fakih said he was certain that his assailants were Shiv Sainiks, and added that he has identified them to the police. According to Fakih, this attack is reprisal for the defiant stand he had taken against the Sainiks when they called a bandh last month. He had refused to close his shop

Four Muslim residents of Bharat Nagar who were present at the police station said their huts were burnt down last night. Late in the evening, Abdul Rehman, who owns a bakery in Kherwadi, alleged that four persons had threatened him with knives, and exorted Rs. 300 from him. This was the sum collected from a customer. This incident occurred just a furlong away from where the police platoon is posted at Kherwadi market.

The trouble in Kherwadi is reported to have started on 20th evening, when DCP Vagal had summoned members of the peace committee to a meeting in a move to restore peace. A senior police officer said that the Shiv Sena shakha pramukh of Kherwadi, Sarpotdar, and another activist Shreekant Sarmalkar were present at this meeting,

which is said to have ended amicably. But members of the Behrampada peace committee alleged that the Sainik chiefs had openly stated that there was no scope for harmony with the Muslims. Shortly after the meeting, Congress MLA Meghji Chheda was reportedly attacked near the Kherwadi Shiv Sena office. Four others following in a car belonging to Usman Ghani of Behrampada, were injured.

Sainik Samalkar stated that the provocation for the attacks came from the Muslims who "were indulging in unlawful activities like bootlegging and screening blue films on video". However he could single out only one resident of Behrampada to substantiate his charge. Incidentally this resident is the owner of a mutton shop in Kherwadi, and he had refused to comply with the Sena's call for bandh when riots broke out in Bhiwandi and Bombay last month. The police stated that there were no charges against this person.

The residents of Behrampada said that two children from their basti were beaten by "goondas" since schools reopened on the 13th. Several hawkers had been harrassed at the market place, they said. With the fresh outbreak of trouble they said they had stopped moving out of the basti. Ninety percent of Behrampada's residents are said to be hawkers.

The residents continue to complain of police high-handedness. This afternoon the residents alleged that the police had rounded up several suspects in connection with the murder of a Hindu early this morning. Boys who were eating their lunch were said to have been dragged by the cops.

To protest the police action, some 500 women from Behrampada and the neighbouring slum of Navpada came on a morcha to the Kherwadi market cross road, where a

platoon of the SRP has been posted. An inspector who was present, tried to maintain a calm facade as the women were coming in, and told this correspondent that they had come "to request for a larger police force". Some of the women who had gathered around this inspector protested vehemently and said "this was a big lie." They said they were being harassed by the Sainiks and the police.

The police stated that only four arrests were made in Kherwadi. From conversations with some of the women present, this correspondent counted as many as 20 persons who were allegedly arrested.

For the first time since the riots broke out, women seem to have come out strongly against the police. This morning some 600 Hindu women from Jawahar Nagar were marching towards Kherwadi police station to demand bandobast in their basti. They alleged that their children were being attacked by hoodlums.

In Kamatipura, some women went on a protest march to Nagpada police station on 15th when the CID officers had reportedly hauled up two boys of 17 and 13 — Abdul Kayyum and Abdul Rahim — as suspects in connection with the murder of sub-inspector Gokhale on 18th last month. They were released after an interrogation which lasted 10 hours. Four other boys who were arrested from Kamatipura in connection with the same case are still said to be languishing in lock up. The police said that no charges had been levelled aginst any of them earlier.

Abdul Rahim, a 25-year-old Rashtriya Sanjay Manch worker was killed in Kurla last night "by a gang" said Surinder Sharma, Manch president in Bombay, "and not by the Shiv Sena". The Manch had already informed the police about the gang, but no action had been taken. The Manch organised a Kurla bandh today and a rasta roko last night.

Jawahar Nagar - Khar (East)

Jawahar Nagar is part of Golibar which is one of the biggest slums in the western suburbs. It has a mixed population, and comprises of different areas. In Jawahar Nagar there are 18,000 Muslims and 2,000 Maharashtrians. In this area there are some criminal gangs operating. We were told that a few gambling dens in this area are run by Dalits and Muslims, and there have been frequent clashes between these gangs. According to one resident of Jawahar Nagar, Ambawadi Zanir Ahmed Amir Ahmed, the trouble started on 22nd May after the late night prayer. The Charnal Masjid was suddenly attacked with soda water bottles and other missiles. Those throwing these missiles were shouting, "Jai Bhim, Jai Bhim, Kill Muslims, Cut Landia* to pieces". People started running helter, skelter. A fire ball was thrown at Mr. Zamir Ahmed's house also, but fortunately it did not catch fire. After some time Zamir Ahmed saw smoke rising from the Mosque, and many Muslims collected there to put out the fire. After sometime the Inspector of Police Ravi Done came and seeing stones, glass pieces and soda water bottles littered around the Mosque, he posted 4 constables there. The constables remained there the whole night but left in the morning despite pleads from the Muslims not to leave. As soon as the police went, there again began the shower of stones, soda water bottles etc. When the Muslims went to the police chowkie they were turned away. The police came after some time and instead of taking action against the culprits, dragged out Pesh Imam (prayer leader) from the Mosque and beat him up mercilessly. He was arrested along with Noor Mohammed and taken to the police chowkie. The Police arrested them

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* Landia is a derogatory word used by Shiv Sainiks for Muslims. (Meaning 'circumcized').

under section 326 & 506. The Pesh Imam was released after 7 days, on bail of Rs. 2,000/-. This spread terror among the Muslims and they fled towards Golibar where they were consoled by both Hindus and Muslims, who together looked after their requirements.

Although the police was posted near the trouble spot, the Muslim houses were broken into and looted in their presence. Two Shiv Sainiks Ashok Dambe and Ashok Haripur, both taxi drivers, were leading the mob armed with swords and guptis. It is a common believe that the police actively helped in the breaking and looting of houses When women were sent to the police station, (Men did not go for fear of arrest) they were turned away without their complaints being registered. The police even allegedly told these women that "it is only houses which have been broken, you have not been broken." Thereafter a local leader Daya Ramji Deval came and assured the Muslims that nothing untoward would happen and that they should come back to their huts. Some people came back on his assurance. However, next day itself, miscreants dragged out 4 persons and killed them. The names of the miscreants were given to the police, but no action was taken. In Ambawadi Shantilal compound, 50-60 Muslim houses were looted and in police firing 13 people were killed, of which 11 were killed from Navapada area in one single day. Of those killed in police firing, 12 were Muslims and one was a Hindu Bhaiyya on Saibaba Road. On 22nd May, Sub-Inspector Kazi from Vakola police station took a round of the area at 8.30. There was a 200 to 250 strong mob of Shiv Sena youth roaring about. He fired fifteen rounds on the mob, injuring 8 Shiv Sainiks. In Indira Nagar, Golibar and Chernal areas 40/50 Muslims were dragged out from their houses and arrested by the police. Ramdas Shirke and Madhukar Shirke are known Shiv Sena leaders from the area who operate from Shantilal compound. They were allegedly working under one boot-

legger known as Bappaji and were active in organizing the attacks. From Jawahar Nagar area Mr. Tajuddin's 15 year old daughter is missing.

D. N. Nagar - Andheri (West)

It is situated in the hilly region behind Navrang Talkies in Andheri West. Quarry mining is carried out here. It is predominantly a working class area. Shiv Sena had earlier also tried to create trouble in the area in 1970. There are two Municipal Corporation seats in the area. One belongs to Shiv Sena and the other to Janata Party. The JP candidate was elected during the Janata wave. Though a Muslim, (AMJN BANU), he is alleged to have sided with the Shiv Sena in the riots. The Muslim population is about 70% in the area. They are concentrated in 2-3 pockets near the mosques. There was tension in the area since many days and the youth used to keep awake at night to guard against attack. The attack finally came on 24th May few soda bottles were thrown. The agitated youth, gathered "and while we were trying to calm them down, police suddenly appeared, opened firing in which luckily nobody was injured. But the police arrested 14 of us and beat us badly. The attack on us still continues and soda bottles are thrown on us." Mosque was also attacked and a huge stone still lying there had made a hole in the concrete roof. Near another mosque in the same area, similar pattern was repeated. 13 persons were arrested from this area including an Imam and were beaten and tortured for 12 to 13 days in the jail. A bayonet was pierced into the leg of one of them making a hole of the size of a 50ps. coin. They were picked from road, beaten and abused. The police even asked them leave India and go to Pakistan. In another area, 17 arrests were made. In this area a Shiv Sena office is broken. The Muslims in the area disown the responsibility. They say they know nothing as to who

broke the office. Police did not even notice the Shiv Sena office and straight started making arrests which suggests a pre-planned attack. The Hindus staying in the Muslim majority area are safe. In fact when they were leaving the area, the Muslims stopped them and told them that they would guard them and would even fight the outsiders attacking them — whether Hindu or Muslims.

Jogeshwari (East)

It is a hutment area of small chawls. A newcomer finds it very difficult to distinguish one lane from another. There are gangs operating in the area — Shiv Sena as well as Muslim gangs. The Muslims number about 10-12,000 in a total population of 1.5 lakhs. Most of the Muslim people are hawkers. A Bohra own Diana Craft industries. This area has a past history of riots — in 1974 where 7 were killed in police firing. '74 riots were triggered by a piece of land where a Arabia school existed and Namaz was offered on the land. Hindus claimed it to be their land by placing a Murti there. Today there is a Mandir, a Shiv Sena shakha and many Hindu hutments. A Muslim cemetry was also burnt in 1974 the land being claimed by Hindus. A court case which ran for 4 years finally restored the possession of the cemetry in Muslims' hands.

The riots started when a marriage procession was stoned from both sides by some miscreants. The marriage was of a Hindu. The nearby Muslim shops were looted and the police started firing, on 19th night, in Hari Nagar. Meghwadi Majas Road, Shanker wadi was attacked with stones & soda bottles. The miscreants got onto roof tops of a nearby Income-tax colony. When the Muslims defended by shouting slogans of 'Nara-e-Takbir', 'Allah-ho-Akbar' & 'Nara-e-Haidri', police fired in which a woman Rabiyabi and 30 years old man Jamshed died. The firing was without warning. This happened in Idgah Maidan. Jamshed was shot by police when he went to pick up the corpse of

Rabiyabi. The Muslim cemetry was again burnt. 40-50 huts behind it were also looted. In the Hindu area also Muslim houses were burnt, but in Muslim area Hindu houses were not touched. 4 houses were looted in Gandhinagar — not even a vessel is left. The P.P. Compound goondas use to collect in Ismail Yusuf college numbering 400-500 at night to plan attacks. A timber mart of Mr. Mohammed Yaseen was set fire in presence of the police. On 22nd May, when Rajiv Gandhi was visiting the area, a Pesh Imam was stabbed. Mr. Syed Ali Zaidi, Secretary of the Peace Committee, informed us that many goondas had come from outside and a truck-full of acid bottles was caught. 5 people died, including a Hindu killed by Shiv Sena was found in a drum — personal rivalry seems to be involved. 4 were killed in police firing — 2 Hindus and 2 Muslims. A Muslim hotel was raided by police and 2-3 knives were snatched as weapons.

Weapons used were — swords, guptis, bombs, tube lights, soda bottles, acid & petrol bulbs. Totally 50 families were looted, including two Christian families — Mr. Gabriel's and Mr. D'Souza's, and two Maharashtrian families. Metro hair dressers — an air-conditioned shop was also looted. The loss in this case was Rs. 1.5 lakh. A bakery in Gandhi Nagar also looted.

Bhayander

This is an important industrial township outside the limits of Greater Bombay along the Western Railway, some 60 K.M. away. There are 15,000 small scale industrial units, mostly owned by people from Bombay. The workers also come to work in these industrial units from different areas of Bombay city and suburbs.

There are very few Muslims in Bhayander, not more than 2000. Most of the industrial units are located in

Bhayander East known as Kharegaon, whereas Bhayander West is mostly residential. Muslims live on both the sides of the Railway lines. Bhayander had not known communal trouble any time. In Bhayander East, Muslims are very poor, mostly workers in bakeries, in factories and serving in shops. There are 3 bakeries and a few timber shops belonging to Muslims. All the three bakeries were attacked and looted. In Rizwan bakery along the main station road, two workers were injured during the attack on 22nd May night which lasted from 11 p.m. upto 2 A.M. Some seven persons were reported to be killed. A Madarsa cum Mosque was also attacked and two persons injured inside, one of whom died later. One Hindu called Verma sleeping on the foot-path was also killed, probably a victim of mistaken identity. Another Muslim sleeping outside MSEB office was stabbed and killed. All Muslims from Bhayander East where the attack took place fled in terror. No one was there when we visited the area. The main Bazar and all the industrial units remained closed for almost a week, due to prevailing terror. However, Muslim houses were not damaged or looted. Only 4-5 bhangar shops (waste materials) owned by Muslims were set ablazed. Along with two of these bhangar shops, one Mr. Ram Swaroop's vegetable stall was also burnt and razed to the ground. However, no trouble took place in Bhayander West.

According to the police officer in-charge of Bhayander Police station, in all six persons died in communal disturbances in and around Bhayander. The police officer also told us that in Ghodbundar town near Bhayander a garage belonging to one Mr. Gupta was attacked. But he felt it was the case of previous animosity. In Ghodbundar town there was also an attack on 7 Hindu bhaiyyas on the night of 21st May. The asssailants were all Hindus, except one Muslim. 8 persons were injured in this assault of which three died later. Of those arrested for this assault, seven were Hindus and one Muslim. In Bhayander in all 27 person were arrested on which one was Muslim.

When we visited Bhayander on 10th June the town was still tense and there was so much terror that no one was prepared to speak even from amongst Hindus. In Bhayander East there were no Muslims as all of them have fled in terror.

DOCUMENTATION SECTION

This section documents the important events pertaining to the riots and reproduces important speeches, interviews, editorials and statements.

Important Events

21st April :

Inauguration of Hindu Manch on Chowpatty in Bombay in which Bal Thackeray launched his anti-Muslim tirade.

11th May :

Parbhani Muslims take out procession in protest against Bal Thackeray's anti-Muslim speech at Chowpatty on 21st April. The participants in the procession, led by A. R. Khan, Congress (I) MLA, garlanded with chappels the portrait of Bal Thackeray.

13th May :

Akhbar-e-Alam carries report of Bal Thackeray's speech of 21st April with provocative headlines in its issue of 13th-20th May.

16th May :

Shiv Sena started imposing forcible bandhs in Bombay and putting up boards outside its offices with slogans like "Quran chhodo ya Hindustan chhodo, Musalman ghaddar hain" etc.

17th May :

Hoisting of flags in Ghunghat Nagar, Bhiwandi leading to a scuffle between Muslims and Shiv Sena workers. 18th May : A riot broke out in Bhiwandi. Attempt to attack a Mosque in Kamatipura at 10 P.M. leading to retaliation in other areas of Central Bombay.

Anti-National Activities of Muslim Revivalists

Marmik, 1-4-1984

By D. S. Bhosle, Kolhapur

Indians Beware. Muslim Revivalists are making their presence felt as in pre-partition days and their anti-national activities are on increase.

Malegaon Municipality has decided to put up a statue of Tipu Sultan who persecuted Hindus.

To errect or put a statue of a person who considered Hindus secondary citizens & persecuted them and encouraged conversion is an anti-national exercise. If we look at the activities of Muslims in either pre-partition or post-partition days it becomes clear that they have always nurtured separatism. They make use of religion to achieve their ultimate aims.

According to our constitution we have the policy of equality of all religions (Sarva Dharma Samabhav). Therefore it would not amount to be biased to apply common civil code to all. But in the name of religion polygamy is followed; family planning is ignored and increasing the number is given priority. If Muslims become a majority it would not help national integration; on the contrary it would mean change of nationality (Rashtrantar)* and it would slowly but certainly lead to disintegration.

The most dangerous of the demands of Muslims is of 33 per cent representation in the armed forces. The motive behind such a demand is clear. Armed forces rather than leaders play the main role in maintaining

* Savarkar's term meaning that change of religion (i.e. conversion) amounts to change of nationality i.e. one becomes anti-national.

the integrity of the nation. If there is division (or split) in the armed forces the country will be put on the verge of civil war and there will be no hesitation to inviting the armies of Muslim countries from Bangla Desh to Malaysia and Indonesia on the east and Pakistan to Libya on the west under the pretext of defending Muslim community.

The main reason for crisis in Lebanon is the separatist role of Muslim communalists and instigation from Muslim countries like Syria and Iran. Lebanese army was divided into Christians and Muslims and ultimately the country was pushed into civil-war and on the pretext of protection of Muslims Syria sent its troops from the east & the north & from south entered Israel and occupied the area upto the capital city of Beirut. In addition to these there are forces of U.S.A., Britain, France and Italy to maintain peace. If we and our leaders don't learn any lesson from this it won't be long before India becomes another Lebanon.

The main question facing us is that while we see all this happening are we and our leaders going to sit idle with our eyes shut and lips tight ?

Due to anti-India slogans by the spectators at the Cricket Match between India and West Indies at Srinagar Skipper Lloyds must have felt he is playing in Pakistan. What does this attitude show — that riots in Malegaon was started because (Hindus) burnt crackers on India's victory over Pakistan in Cricket ? If our leaders think it wise not to oppose erecting a statue of 'Tipu' in Malegaon it will prove to be a blunder in the long run and the history will never forgive them.

It is a serious thing that no leader cautions when anti-national incidents like these are taking place. Shiv Sena Chief Shri Bala Saheb Thackeray has warned all

those whose loyalties are to countries other than Mother land. All Indians must welcome it.

Whoever finds the pronouncement of the truth by Thackeray improper, will be supporting separatism.

If the future of democracy is to be threatened by ballot-box (Voting) and if there will thus be disruption, then we must take proper steps right now.

Mussalmans Cannot Live in Hindustan

By G. W. Behare

Editor, Sobat, Pune, 6-5-1984

We tried to treat mussalmans as our brothers, gave them equal privileges. To please them we sacrificed things revered in our culture. We started accepting modern concepts like Democracy, Socialism, Secularism. We thought that wisdom would dawn on Mussalmans and keeping with time they would also behave like respectable citizens of this country. In spite of paying a high price we could not change muslim community as a whole. Whatever reforms we executed were limited to Hindus only and we let the other religions live in the darkness. We could not bring about any reforms among them neither could we pressurize them to do so. Religion by itself gives tremendous protection. Hindus have done away with that kind of protection of the religion but other religions — small and big — have retained that shell of religion and consolidated themselves under that shell. In the democracy unified force of these religions kept growing day by day. Their proportion to the total population also went on increasing. Whenever convenient they sought protection of the constitution when strength or force of religion was found convenient they took advantage of that too.

In spite of all this we have not learnt any lesson from the history.

Communal mussalmans responsible for the partition have stayed back in Hindustan and their ambition to convert Hindustan into Islam was never challenged. In the democratic polity mussalmans have become a menacing force. In spite of partition and all the blood shed and all the atrocities the root cause of Hindu-Mussalman conflict still persists. Muslim league regained prestige. Muslim league the organisation that indulges into anti-national activities so openly is not communal in the eyes of congress but all those institutions working for organising Hindus are communal.

Mussalmans commit atrocities, treason openly express their loyalties to other muslim countries, even carry out mass-conversions and the Congress government remains just a silent spectator. The mussalmans keep bullying because the political parties cannot afford to lose their votes. We cannot impose as simple a thing as common civil code. Outside the Quran nothing is acceptable to them. Very concept of a nation is opposed to Quran. Therefore if anything is to be blamed for their not having any feelings — affection for this country it is Quran. Character of Quran — Shariat i.e. Islamic system of governance is opposed to our constitution and law. If we have faith in our constitution we will have to ban Quran and Islamic system of governance. There can not be two laws in one country. And since according to mussalmans Quran is immutable they have either to leave this country or defy Quran and if they don't want to do either of this they have to defy Indian Constitution.

Mussalmans accept the later option. They accept the principle of equality of and protection to religion as provided in the constitution. It is because of these principles in the constitution that they can continue their menacing

activities in this country. But the Indian Constitution is not acceptable to them. Neither Democracy nor secular socialism of this country. The idea of 'Sarva-dharma Samabhav' or equality of all religions they find nauseating. They believe that no other religion can be on a par with the one of the Prophet. In fact they believe that any religion that gives commandments other than those of the Quran is non-religion. Mohammed has ordered them to destroy any such religion. This clear position is that to allow any one other than the follower of Islam to live in this world is a crime to Allah and therefore to abduct women of those who follow idol worship or to loot their property or to kill them is no crime according to their religion. And it is because of this that they have not hidden their aim to convert entire Hindustan into Islam. The only option we are left with is either to embrace Islam or to destroy Islam as Islam cannot co-exist with any other religion. Islam certainly cannot co-exist with the religion that follows idol worship.

'Akhbar-E Alam' What it Published in its Issue Dated 13th-19th May

Give up the Quran or quit India. Impose complete restriction on the Quran and Shariat — Provocation by the Marathi weekly **Sobat.**

Bal Thackeray's venomous speech intolerable.

The Prophet of Muslims used to clean our toilet.

Muslims are a cancer.

Bal Thackeray is now becoming a torture for Muslims. Since Bal Thackeray has allied himself with the diehard Hindu communalists, his tongue has become very venomous as far as the Muslims are concerned. In several past issues we have drawn attention of the Govern-

ment to the Bal Thackeray's anti-Muslim writings but the Government has turned deaf ears to these, or else the Government is backing Bal Thackeray. We think if some Muslim had said half of this against any non-Muslim sects, he would have been behind the bars.

The first session of Hindu Maha Sangh was held on 21st April on Chowpatty. Hindu Maha Sangh is a dangerous combination of Hindu organisations, which has been set up at the initiative of Bal Thackeray and its leadership is in the hands of Bal Thackeray and Hindu Mahasabha leader Vikram Savarkar.

Bal Thackeray broke all previous records of animosity against Muslims while speaking on Chowpatty on 21st April. His speech was provocative beyond all doubts, and it endangers peace. The police commissioner and the administration would be justified in taking action against him under Section 151(a) of Indian Penal Code specially when the special branch has recorded this speech.

The Muslim Action committee, Nasik has also presented a memorandum to the chief minister of Maharashtra Vasantdada Patil against his Girgaum, Chowpatty and Nasik speeches. It is now to be seen whether any action is taken against him or this tongue-lashing man is allowed to get away with it.

He described Muslims as landias (i.e. an extremely derogatory term for circumcised Muslims). Mr. Bal Thackeray describes Muslims as landias even in his magazine. He said in his speech :

"I am using the word landia for Muslims. Police should also note this. Landias made Pakistan; therefore, they have no right to live in India."

Describing Indian Muslims as cancer Bal Thackeray

said : "Indian Muslims are cancer for this country. Cancer is an incurable disease. In 1947 this cancer was two and half crores; now it has spread all over the country. Its only cure is operation. Provoking the Hindus he said, "O Hindus you take weapons in your hands and remove this cancer from its very roots."

Hurling insults at the prophet, Bal Thackeray said, "Muslims say that the prophet was a great personality. But there was nothing like this. People fell on his feet as he wielded sword. If I take up sword, people would fall on my feet also.

Bal Thackeray, narrating an event further said, "That scoundrel Rafiq Zakaria often narrates a story that Hazrat Mohammad was tolerant towards non-Muslims. Once a non-Muslim committed shit in the mosque. All Muslims stood up to beat him but the prophet stopped them and cleaned the shit by throwing water on it.

The way Bal Thackeray presented this event by distorting it to make an insulting attack on the prophet, no Muslim would tolerate it. (emphasis in the original).

Interview of Bal Thackeray

'Free Press Journal', 24, May, 1984

"Let us get one thing straight. The riots that have rocked Bombay and its outskirts are between the Hindus and the Muslims and not between the Shiv Sainiks and the Muslims, as has been portrayed by some vested interests," asserted Shiv Sena Chief Bal Thackeray.

For a man, who has been accused in certain quarters of instigating these riots by his provocative speeches and other actions. Thackeray looked calm and composed as he sat in the visitors' room in his bungalow and talked to

this reporter in the presence of about a dozen staunch followers who had apparently come to brief him on the current situation.

Clad in saffron "lungi" and "kurta", Thackeray puffed at his favourite pipe as he declared : "It is very likely that Wakhar Momin, the Congress (I) MLA in Bhiwandi is in some way instrumental in the riots there."

The one-hour interview covered only the riots as he was "too preoccupied with the clashes" to think of other things which were quite important otherwise. This is the gist of the conversation FPJ had with the Sena Chief.

* Do you think the riots were pre-planned ?

Yes, they were. Muslim League leader G. M. Banatwala had openly stated that there would be bloodshed if the Shiv Jayanti procession was allowed in Bhiwandi. Banatwala, who has been elected to Parliament from Kerala, has no business to poke his nose in local politics. It is no secret that swords and other lethal weapons had been stored in Mosques.

* Do you concede that your utterances are likely to have provoked certain sections of people ?

Am I not free to express my views in an independent democratic country that we are supposed to be ? If the Press can write with venom that it was an insult to the chappals and not to me when my effigy was garlanded with chappals in Parbhani. I have every right to express myself.

* Do you find any moral justification for the bloodshed ?

Did you get independence without shedding blood ? In this case, there is only retaliation. When there is action, there is always reaction. What do you expect when sub-inspector Nandkumar Gokhale is butchered for

nothing ? Obviously the underworld has been backing the trouble-makers. We Hindus are not equipped with lethal weapons.

* Do you support fanaticism ?

No, I don't. By nature, we Hindus are not fanatics. But those who are fanatics and those who have no love for this country are forcing us to be more religious-minded. No other nation will tolerate citizens whose loyalties lie elsewhere. Now it is beyond our tolerance.

* How long do you expect the riots to continue ?

How do I know ? Do I have some sort of remote control ? If they attack we hit back. After all it is our country. They must live here as Indians. We, as the citizens of this country, have every right to take out a procession along the route of our choice.

* Do you think the police are playing their role properly ?

I don't want to create a fresh controversy now that I have already signed an appeal to citizens to establish peace. But I don't understand one thing. What business did Rajiv Gandhi have to discuss the law and order situation in the city with the Police Commissioner ? May be he is the Prime Minister's son and AICC (I) general secretary, but that hardly gives him the right to dabble in administration. But that is how it is in our country. It is a mockery of democracy.

* You have been talking and writing about the pampering of minorities by those in power for political gains. How long do you say it will continue ?

As long as the regime of the Nehru dynasty lasts. (Telephone rings and it is Pramod Mahajan, all-India secretary of the BJP, on the line. He thanks Thackeray for his support to BJP candidate Shivajirao Gotad, who

got elected to the State Assembly from Ratnagiri. Thackeray tells him : "A. B. Vajpayee had made a spirited statement that the Hindus would no longer get beaten up. I want you to remind him of his utterance").

* Do you expect the Government to find a permanent solution to the malady ?

Sorry, I don't. I have learnt not to expect anything from the Congress Government. The Chief Ministers are more puppets in the hands of what they call the High Command. Look at Vasantdada Patil. He is in power but has no power.

* There have been wild rumours that former Chief Minister A. R. Antulay has a hand in the riots. Any comment ?

Go and ask Antulay. How am I supposed to comment on that ? Actually, I have not met him for months. But he continues to be my friend. He did for Maharashtra what no other Chief Minister did.

* How do you distinguish between pro-India and anti-India Muslims ?

There should not be any such thing as pro-India. There are only Indians and those who consider themselves otherwise, and burst crackers when Pakistan wins a game of hockey or cricket against my country, should get lost.

* You attended the "peace meet" of prominent citizens convened by the Chief Minister.

I did. In front of Shivaji Maharaj's portrait in the lobby of Mantralaya, I challenged Dr. Rafique Zakaria to install Maharaj's statue in Malegaon, a mini-Pakistan, and then get the Prime Minister to unveil it. They will never do it.

* Anything else ?

Thus far and no further. And don't create problems for me. I am quite capable of doing so myself. Jai Maharashtra !

Interview of Banatwalla

'Free Press Journal', 26, May, 1984

G. M. Banatwalla, MP and general secretary of the Indian Union Muslim League, has asserted that the present clashes are Shiv Sainik attacks upon Muslims. Vehemently refuting Bal Thackeray's contention that clashes are between Hindus and Muslims and not between Shiv Sainiks and Muslims, he said "Why must you blame all Hindus for it ?"

Sitting in his freshly painted house in Bombay Central, clad in his usual sherwani, churidar and Maulana cap, looking calm and serene, he spoke to the FPJ in an exclusive interview, putting forth his views on the riots and what sparked them off.

* Shiv Sena Chief Bal Thackeray has alleged that your statement that rivers of blood will flow if a Shiv Jayanti procession at Bhiwandi is permitted has triggered off the riots. What have you to say ?

When have I said so ? Whose blood ? It is our blood that is flowing. I was not heard to have said anything about the Shiv Jayanti procession. It is all a figment of Bal Thackeray's imagination.

I have in the past, objected to the giving of permission in view of the prevalent tension and violence in which the processionists and Shiv Sainiks have indulged. Had I been here, I would have surely objected to the procession in Bhiwandi in view of the situation there. It

is unfortunate that the procession is used as an excuse by the Shiv Sainiks to indulge in an orgy of violence. They use abusive slogans and indecent signs.

And in any case, there are others who still hold that the permission given this year was wrong.

* Why have you not clarified your stand on this matter earlier ?

I have explained this to whoever has bothered to ask me about it. What more can I do ?

* Why do you think Bal Thackeray is making these allegations ?

Bal Thackeray, finding himself in a difficult position, to divert attention from his responsibility, is making these baseless allegations against me to add to the confusion.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the responsibility lies with the Shiv Sena and Bal Thackeray. There is no real riot as such. The true nature of the trouble is that a well-organised Shiv Sena attack on the Muslims with the active and unfortunate connivance of the police has been launched. The Government's reluctance to take action against Bal Thackeray and the Shiv Sena has emboldened them. It cannot be denied that the Shiv Sena enforced a bandh at the point of violence. That is the crux of the problem.

* Why do you suggest that the police are siding with the Shiv Sainiks ?

It is clear. Take the example of the police terror let loose at Cheetah Camp yesterday. Police brutalities without any provocation are indescribable. The Chief Minister should suspend the responsible police officers and take action, if public confidence in administration is to be regained and maintained.

* What do you think has been the general nature of the riots ?

Well, the Shiv Sainiks attack and run away. The police arrive, fire upon and beat up the Muslims, the victims of the attack who had gathered in panic. This has been the pattern without exception.

The police have always come after the trouble and have fired indiscriminately. That explains why a large parts of those killed and injured are by police bullets.

* In a recent interview to the FPJ, Thackray has said that the loyalty of some Muslims lies elsewhere and that even in matters like cricket matches, Muslims support Pakistan ? What do you feel ?

Bal Thackeray has lost his mental balance. He has really lost his mind. Muslim loyalty is unimpeachable. There has not been a single instance of Muslim disloyalty to this country. In any case, we Muslims do not require a loyalty certificate from the likes of Thackeray and the Shiv Sena.

Thackeray has constantly made provocative, venomous, tenditious and baseless remarks, which have poisoned the atmosphere against Muslims. It is good that all do not consume his baseless propaganda. But the Shiv Sainiks, true to their leader, are indulging in this orgy of violence.

* Thackeray has cited your presence on the National Integration Committee as the reason for his resignation from it. What do you have to say about that ?

Perhaps he is afraid to face me and the facts I have. I must assert that the resignation is a result of the compulsion of his ideology. He believes in Hindu Rashtra and not in minorities and their culture. He does not call for national integration. He wants those who do not

follow his Hindu Rashtra concept to leave the country. How can he be dedicated to national integration when he is a fascist dictator? He believes in regional chauvinism. In Maharashtra, he does not see any place for anyone who is not a Maharashtrian according to his definition and choice. His ideology is the greatest obstacle to national integration and Thackeray himself is a tragedy for the unity and solidarity of the country.

* Why do you think there are more clashes between Hindus and Muslims than Hindus and any other minority?

Simple. We are a considerable minority and as such draw attention.

* It has been said by Thackeray that the clashes are between Hindus and Muslims and not between Shiv Sainiks and Muslims. Do you think this is so?

Why must you blame all Hindus for it? It is a Shiv Sainik attack upon Muslims, pure and simple.

Thackeray is distorting the picture to suit his own convenience. The situation speaks for itself and does so eloquently. That the responsibility rests with the Shiv Sena is clear. The true nature of the responsibility is found in the Shiv Sainik attack on the Muslims.

* The BJP has strongly objected to A. R. Antulay being named president of the relief committee for riot victims. Any comments?

Antulay can take care of himself. He did not invite us to the meeting of this relief committee. Anyway, I think all should work shoulder to shoulder for the promotion of peace.

* It has been said in certain circles that the Congress (I) has colluded with the Shiv Sena to divert the attention

from the Adik, and Autulay affairs and also the party infighting.

Let there be a probe into it. I am not concerned with the internal bickerings or factions in the Congress (I) or whether they are supporting the Shiv Sena or not.

At present Muslims are the victims and we have to save them from the frenzy of the Shiv Sena.

* Thackeray has alleged that you as an MP elected from Kerala should not interfere in local politics. Do you think so ?

Matters of national integration are everybody's concern. Law and order, national peace are not anybody's monopoly.

In any case, I am a greater Maharashrian than he is. I studied here. I did my Masters in Commerce from the Bombay University. I was a member of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly for more than 10 years.

When the controversy about whether Bombay should be part of Maharashtra or Gujarat was raging, the Muslim League categorically declared that Bombay is an integral part of Maharashtra. Let not Bal Thackeray come and teach us how to be Maharashtrians.

Now look at the people in Kerala. I don't stay there. I do not speak their language. I only go there a week before the elections. Being elected from there is a tribute to the national consciousness of the people there.

Bal Thackeray is not serving the cause in the larger interest of the nation.

* Peace committees are a short-term measure why has no long-term solution to communal disharmony emerged over the years ?

What is needed is the political will. Even when I am

saying that the responsibility of the riots lies with Shiv Sena and Bal Thackeray, the Government has not taken any action.

There is no dearth of recommendations of judicial commissions; no dearth of suggestions. I can cite an example here. On May 11, 1983, the Prime Minister sent directives to the Chief Ministers of all States, enumerating steps to be taken to combat communal violence and measures for welfare of minorities including Muslims. More than a year has passed but the recommendations of the Prime Minister still await implementation.

* Do you have any message for your Muslim brethren ?

I have always told one and all not to accept any provocation and to help maintain peace. We have to save our country from such fascist ideology as that of Bal Thackeray. The situation calls for greater dedication and greater efforts towards promoting and maintaining the solidarity of the country.

It's All A Slandar

Interview with Chief Minister,
Bombay — 7-2-1984

Chief Minister Vasantdada Patil must be the most worried man in the state today. Already weighed down by ill-health and intra-party dissensions, he was faced last month with the biggest challenge to his ministerial gaddi : the worst riots to convulse Bombay and Bhiwandi in the post-independence years. By most accounts, he met the challenge poorly and he was not spread the criticism.

Last fortnight, soon after his return from inaugurating a government rehabilitation home for riot victims in

Bhiwandi, the burdened Chief Minister met BOMBAY's SAAED HAIDER to answer questions ranging from how the government proposed to deal with Bal Thackeray to why the army was moved in so late.

Q. Before the riots in Bombay on 21 April, Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray delivered a speech which has been considered inflammatory. Thackeray has denied that he made derogatory references to the Prophet Mohammed, but he has not denied the rest of the speech which Muslims consider as being derogatory. Don't you thing this speech fanned communal hatred ?

A. He has been talking like this for several years. No one has ever given it any importance. I also believe that the speech was in bad taste. I have given his speech to an advocate to see whether a case could be initiated against him. We may take action soon.

Q. It is said that Thackeray has always maintained good relations with Congress Chief Ministers, with the exception of S. B. Chavan and that all of them have protected him. It is said that now you, too, are protecting him.

A. It is all a slander. I can never protect a person like Thackeray.

Q. Will you request the centre to ban the Shiv Sena ?

A. Mrs. Gandhi's statement on banning the Shiv Sena has already been published I support that.

Q. You have come under severe criticism for not ordering the immediate deployment of the army in Bombay soon after the riots broke out ?

A. Riots actually broke out in the city on 19 May. Before that there were stray incidents and soon after the

army moved in. However, let me tell you that the army cannot take total control of the city, they do not know the lanes, streets and localities. It will largely depend on police guidance. And let me tell you that the army should not be called in unless the situation is grave.

Q. As in Bhiwandi . . . ?

A. No. In Bhiwandi, the violence was only on 18 May and the incident at Mr. Ansari's residence on the next day. After that there were stray incidents of shooting.

Q. When Mrs. Gandhi and her son Rajiv visited Kamatipura, you didn't step out of the car ?

A. You know that I have trouble with my leg. I can't walk properly. There was a big crowd that day. I would have fallen had I tried to come out, and the police would have charged the crowd to save me. Moreover, Mrs. Gandhi and Governor Latif were already talking to the people. There was no need for me to come out.

Q. You have been criticised for not rushing to Bhiwandi immediately, and so has your minister of state for Home Affairs for conducting as aerial survey when what was needed was an on-the-spot study.

A. I went to Bhiwandi the next day (19 May). I could not go the same day because I had other work to do. I had to watch the situation in Kalyan, Thane and Bombay, and also had other administrative work. I sent Vilasijirao Deshmukh. He didn't go for an aerial survey, but since the roads were blocked he had to go by plane. However, on a subsequent occasion he did go by car.

Q. What influenced your decision to allow the Shiv Jayanti procession in Bhiwandi this year after a gap of 14 years ?

A. It was my decision. I took it after assessing the overall situation. During my reply to the question on the Governor's welcome address in the budget session this year, opposition leaders requested me to allow the Shiv Jayanti procession from this year.

Q. Who were these opposition leaders ?

A. All of them — Dinkar Patel, Sharad Pawar and almost all the BJP men. So I told them that all parties should help to prepare the right atmosphere for it and that confidence should be restored among the Muslims. I went to Bhiwandi and talked with people of both the communities. Representatives of the Muslims told me that they did not have any objections.

Q. Who were these Muslim leaders ?

A. Now I don't remember their names. Another factor that influenced me was that the Shiv Jayanti in Kalyan, which was allowed two years ago after a 10 years' gap, passed off peacefully. I also learned that, even if permission were not given, the Shiv Sena, Bharatiya Janata Party, Patit Pawan and Hindu Ekta were deciding to take out the procession. I told them that they could do so, but that the procession should take a different route and timing. They agreed, and the procession took place peacefully.

Q. Don't you think that the procession was one of the reasons for the riot ?

A. I do not think so. The controversy started over the flag and not over the Shiv Jayanti Procession.

Q. In a recent statement you had said that your government was crippled because of the 14 dissident ministers, and that this was the reason for its confusion and ineffectiveness. If in the near future the Centre does not

allow you to drop these 14, would you still want to continue as CM ?

A. Right now, I would not like to say anything about it.

Garland of Fire

Editorial, 'Sunday Observer', 20-5-1984

Fourteen years after communal violence ravaged Bhiwandi, the prosperous powerloom town is once again caught in the grip of a murderous frenzy. And this time the flames of communal violence have even seared the city of Bombay, which has so far been free of any major conflagration.

After the outbreak of violence on Friday, the Maharashtra government acted quickly and sent the army into Bhiwandi. The chief minister's prompt response to the orgy of communal violence is in striking contrast to the dilly-dallying of Vasantrao Naik's Congress (I) government in 1970, a fact which came in for strong criticism from the subsequent enquiry commission into the riots. But Mr. Vasantrao Patil's administration appears to have misjudged the growing threat of communal violence ever since the Shiv Sena began its campaign in protest against the insult to its chief Bal Thackeray and failed to take adequate preventive measures to check a dangerously volatile situation. It remains a matter of amazement that in spite of the prolonged history of communal strife in Bhiwandi and the threat posed by the Shiv Sena campaign, there were neither enough policemen nor fire engines to control the orgy of arson, looting and murder in the powerloom town.

The administration appeared to have been caught napping in Bombay also, as Shiv Sena hoodlums went around selected areas enforcing bandhs since Wednesday.

The Shiv Sena, even though a splintered and much weakened organisation today, was allowed to call the shots. Inevitably, the situation turned violent, especially in areas of the city that are known to be prone to communal tensions.

The latest bout of communal frenzy has its origins in a speech delivered by Bal Thackeray in Bombay last month, when the notorious Muslim-baiter unleashed yet another vicious attack on the country's largest minority community. Mr. Thackeray, who claims to possess to tape-recorded version of his speech, has more or less confirmed that it was blantantly communal by denying only one part of his reported diatribe-that he had insulted Prophet Mohammed. Otherwise, his observations on Indian Muslims are in keeping with his record of militant opposition to the minority community. As the chief of a splintered organisation, Mr. Thackeray has metamorphosed from a powerful city leader into a celebrity, eagerly sought by the media for his extreme opinions. The demand has been made for his arrest, but it is a sad commentary on the position he enjoys that even though the chief minister expressed criticism of his role (without naming him), the government cannot proceed against him for inciting communal frenzy.

As if Mr. Thackeray's speech was not bad enough the Muslims of Parbhani took it upon themselves to respond to the communal incitement by garlanding a picture of the Shiv Sena leader with chappals. This happened at a public meeting at which a Congress (I) MLA, A. R. Khan, was present. It was a thoughtlessly provocative response, and has pushed an unkown and insignificant MLA into statewide notoriety.

Even after the army was called out in Bhiwandi, the situation is not fully in control and several more deaths and cases of arson were reported on Saturday. Bhiwandi has remained a simmering volcano since 1970, and it was

only this year that the government allowed the Shiv Jayanthi procession to be taken out for the first time in 14 years. The occasion passed off peacefully, thanks in large measure to heavy police bandobast all along the route. But just as Muslim residents had trickled back into town and the SRP sent back to the barracks, the Shiv Sena campaign ignited another wave of arson and murder. After the law and order situation has been brought under control, it is essential for the Maharashtra government to look beyond the necessity for seasonal preventive measures and to devise a plan for removing the distrust and fear in Bhiwandi.

Editorial by Syed Shahabuddin

'Muslim India', June, 1984

Dear Reader,

I have not yet been to Bhiwandi and I shall offer no excuse. I simply had no desire to go there. I did not have to go there to know what had happened.

Without going there I can see in my mind's eye the charred remains, the stinking corpses, the desolate landscape, the dazed and deranged faces of fear and despair. I have seen it all before, in Jamshedpur, in Moradabad, in Meerut, in Assam ... this macabre dance of death, this orgy of destruction, this Tandav Nritya. Who cares for the re-run of an old horror movie?

The Times of India was moved to refer to Bhiwandi as 'the manifestation of hell on earth. For me, it is the re-enactment of an ancient passion play, the old drama of hatred and violence. The stage is the same : the setting is familiar: the sequence is well-known: the personae dramatis are the same: the roles are unchanged; blood has the same colour: fire has the same heat: sorrow speaks the same language: even the killer's laughter has

the same ring! What about the high point of drama, you would ask, the roasting alive of men, women and children in Ansari Baug? Nothing new; it happened on a much larger scale in Jamshedpur in 1978, even if the Times of India does not remember it. And the audience? This is also the same.

So, what is so special about Bhiwandi-II? Failure of intelligence ? Administrative callousness ? Governmental inefficiency? Police partisanship? Police watching as spectators; police participating in loot, assault and arson? Police acting as the avant garde of the Shiv Sena? Police firing on the attacked to overcome resistance ? Delay in calling in the army? Time lost till the local authorities hand over charge to the army? Neglect of signals? Political insensitivity? Nothing new-all these have characterised all such 'Happenings' every where.

For months Bal Thackeray had been haranguing crowds, spouting fire and brimstone, carrying on a vicious and venomous campaign, calling, the Muslim community 'a cancer in the body politic', 'a band of traitors', 'Pakistani fifth columnists', referring to them with contempt, showing disrespect to their religion, abusing Allah and the Prophet, calling upon the Hindus to throw the Muslims out, asking the Muslims to recognise their masters and make due and proper obeissance to them, to choose between the Quran & India, not in one speech, not in one place, not in one interview, not in one paper, but in a series of speeches and interviews, all over the state, for months. The Government acted as if it was deaf and dumb and blind, as if in their imbecility they not only failed to realise what Bal Thackeray was after; they did not appreciate what verbal incendiarism implied; as if they did not know that such defamatory tirades, such offensive remarks, such wholesale denigration of a communtiy was against the law of the land. They did not even take notice when people left their homes on the eve of the Shivaji Jayanti procession which was permitted to

be taken out in Bhiwandi after 14 years.

What is the point of democracy, if the state cannot guarantee security of life ? What is the point of secularism, if citizens are slaughterd in broad day light within shouting distance of the forces of law and order, only because they profess a faith of their choice. Culture becomes meaningless and development is futile, if such orgies take place with nauseating frequency and what is the rule of law. if perpetrators go scot free ? No doubt, the Prime Minister broke her norm and rushed to Bhiwandi. She also sent her Home Minister and her son, the Crown Prince, and the General Secretary of her party, and a whole battalion of Ministers. She found it difficult to control her tears. She found unbearable the stench of burnt flesh and the stink of rotting corpses. But what did she say ? What did she do ? She said : "Minorities wherever they are in large numbers are over-sensitive". Does it imply that Bhiwandi Muslims must pay because the Muslims of far-off Parbhani over-reacted to Thackeray's blasphemies ? Does the Prime Minister desire minorities to acquiesce in humiliation and intimidation. to bow their heads and keep their mouth shut and even refrain from demanding action under the law of the land ? She also said : "Do not criticise the police: that will demoralise them" — No, we must praise their dedication and heroism, so that they can re-enact more Cheetah Camps !

Predictably, the Crown Prince said : There is a foreign hand. People take the hint. The scenario changes immediately. Pakistanis overstaying in Bombay, our enemies, smuggle arms and organise riots in order to defame us. If, in the process, Bhiwandi Muslims end up as corpses, it shows nothing but poor planning and their stupid martyrdom syndrome.

Yes, there was some resistance here and there. Even some acts of blind vengeance, acts of black despair, be-

cause they have no faith in the government or the machinery of law and order. Mr. Home Minister, where is your Task Force ? There are the Anti-riot Special Battalions of the CRPF ? How many Muslims have been inducted into the Maharashtra Police since the National Integration Council decided in Novembr 1982 that the composition of the police force must represent a cross-section of the population ? What is the percentage of Muslims in the SRP, one year after the Directive of the Prime Minister ? You do not know. You are truly secular. You never count in terms of communities. Can you find out whether the PM's Directives have been ignored or applied by Vasantdada and his Maratha warriors ?

And the media ? The jealously guard their convention of silence. 'No communal tables, please, we are Indians'. They do not name the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bhiwandi, whose farmhouse provided the laboratory for roasting human flesh. But they do give the name of the police inspector who was killed by anti-social elements after the riots began. They do not give the names or even the community-wise break-up of the dead or the injured or the arrested but provide a subtle touch by publishing photographs of lines of youngmen in 'lungis' detailed as miscreants. So you know who they are. Shocked and shamed as the country was, its conscience is put at ease; the self-image is restored; the shame is brushed aside. The foreign hand, the propaganda line over sensitive and assertive minorities, initial provocation by Muslims or beginning the tale from the middle, from the procession in Parbhani and the green flags in Bhiwandi — all serve this national purpose.

Now, they say, Bhiwandi is normal; the storm has passed, its fury spent; vultures have flown off, their hunger satisfied; devil has supped of the human blood and has retired to his lair, with charred and rotting corpses piled up before the alter of secularism. But the

Government has refused to hold a judicial inquiry; no special courts have been set up to try the culprits and the sainiks; no policeman has been suspended; no officer has been transferred; no punitive fine have been imposed, even the usual ex-gratia payments to the next of kin have not been made. Vasantdada continues to preside over the moral wilderness, that is Maharashtra.

Bal Thackeray has not been detained. Is he above the law? Is he beyond the reach of the Government? The Prime Minister told a group of MPs: "We cannot arrest him because the Hindus are very angry". I assure you, Madam, that many Hindus are angry because you have chosen not to act. All those who have the good of the country at heart, all those who have compassion, goodwill and sympathy, all those who cherish secular ideals and the thoughts of Gandhi and Nehru will not be angry. They shall applaud you. And they are not a few. They are still a majority. They constitute the force of good, for the moment they stand immobilised, frozen; one shock and they shall spring into action.

Dear Countrymen, Bhiwandi shall be rebuilt. Blood drops shall crystallise into red poppies. With time, the great healer, man will get over pain and suffering. In the great mass of nameless, faceless humanity that is our land, widows and orphans shall get lost. Do we count the flies we swat or do we remember the faces of the mosquitoes we crush? In the glory of sending a rocket into space, of an expedition to Antartica, of a dive into the ocean, in the magical world marked by Colour TV, in the extravaganza of state visits, Bhiwandi-II shall soon be forgotten.

The question, therefore, is has the country learnt a lesson? Has the Government drawn any conclusions? Shall it apply the law, henceforth, without fear or favour? Shall it remain in a state of alert and act at the first signal? No. we shall be caught napping again.

Once again the Prime Minister shall exclaim, what a shame, and then go on with business of government. And Thackerays and Balraj Madhoks shall continue to promote the gospel of hate and violence.

Muslim Indians, do not be overwhelmed by suffering, do not despair, do not succumb to provocation, do not raise your hand against the innocent; do not take the law in your hands; do not hurt the religious feelings of your fellow citizens, even in anger, but PROTEST and raise your voice against injustice and defend yourself with all your might. Above all, keep your chin up. have faith in Allah and in the ultimate victory of good over evil and in the goodwill and sanity of vast majority of our people.

New Delhi
31 May 1984.

Fraternally yours,
SYED SHAHABUDDIN.

Act Firmly

Editorial, 'Indian Express', 21-5-1984

Fourteen years after the communal carnage that took over 100 lives in Bhiwandi, this powerloom centre has been the scene of ghastly communal violence which, along with incidents in Bombay and Thane, has taken a grim toll of lives and property. More than that, community relations have been lamentably scarred. The Government has done well to call in the Army, which moved into Bhiwandi on Friday, and to issue shoot at sight orders if any group of miscreants creates trouble. The Chief Minister has spoken of two dangers : wild rumours giving rise to alarm and panic, and a tendency for tension to spread into the countryside. Vigilance is necessary on both fronts. Rumours can only be countered by prompt and accurate information. With rural-urban migration and the opening up of communications, it is only to be expected that persons fleeing from death and destruction should seek refuge in the rural hinterland.

Exaggerated tales of mayhem by angry or frightened "refugees" is always calculated to inflame passions or cause groups to get together to protect themselves which immediately suggests omimous intent to other groups which might respond in kind or even make a preemptive strike under the "leadership" of irresponsible hotheads or hoodlums out to achieve glory.

Fortunately, in Bhiwandi, level-headed members of both communities have rallied to maintain the peace and must be encouraged and strengthened to stop the rot spreading despite provocation by agents provocateur. The mischief started with the Shiv Sena trying to force bandhs and take out processions in various places following reports that a portrait of their leader, Mr. Bal Thackeray, was garlanded with shoes by a Congress (I) MLA protesting against provocative speeches hurtful to the religious sentiment of the minority community. Mr. Thackeray's rabble rousing parochialism is not unknown, but neither he nor anyone else can be allowed to get away with verbal incendiarism and worse. The utmost firmness is necessary. It is a sobering thought that a stronger administration not harried by petty partisan infighting at the top would itself have discouraged the kind of adventurism indulged in by anti-social elements.

Act Firmly, Well in Time

'Indian Express', 26-6-1984

It says something for the disrepair of the civil administration and the organisation and tenacity of the mischievous elements trying to stir up communal tensions and social unrest that there should have been a recrudescence of violence in Bombay and Thane over the past few days. It is sad that the Army has had to be called out again, even if only to undertake a flag march in some of the affected areas of Bombay. But it is as well that it has

been sommoned ahead of time in aid of civil power, before things get out of hand. The latest tension comes in the wake of the arrest of a Shiv Sena leader under NSA from the Kherwadi area of North-Western Bombay following stray incidents of stabbing. The Shiv Sena leader was reportedly guilty of making inflamatory statements. A number of young hoodlums were also picked up by the police for indulging in stone throwing. The Bhiwandi-Thane-Bombay riots last month were triggered by rabble-rousing speeches allegedly made by the Shiv Sena Chief, Mr. Bal Thackeray, some of them calculated to wound the religious sentiments of the Muslim minority. Quite possibly, some of these references were distorted and sensationalised by one or two local Urdu papers some time after the event, resulting in rival group mobilisation. No such sequence must be allowed to recur and the administration has done well to invoke stern measures at the first hint of trouble.

The Shiv Sena is a declining force anxious to register its presence and try and build up electoral strength on the basis of narrow parochial and communal appeals. There are large pools of socially discontented and economically deprived people, particularly youth, and lumpen elements who are easily taken in by heady and adventurous slogans and have nothing to lose by civic turmoil. Land racketeers, slum lords, smugglers and other criminal or dubious elements are also on the prowl, ready to instigate tensions, even if it means rioting and arson, in order to make quick, illegitimate gains one way or the other at the cost of the community and the exchequer. This criminalisation of politics is a growing menance to civilised living but has acquired muscle and daring on account of the politicisation of crime. This unholy alliance has to be broken. Its very power and spread demands bold and decisive action rather than timorous compromises with underworld forces that could undermine the state.

The malaise is not limited to any one part of the country though the symptoms are more obviously manifest in certain areas. Bombay is probably the major base for smuggling and black money in the country, a far from enviable distinction for a city that was until recently looked upon as a model of civil enlightenment, national integration and cosmopolitanism. Understandably, the very opportunities that Bombay offers have become a magnet and the despair of those that cannot make it. The answer does not lie in law and order measures alone. Nor can Bombay tackle the problem by itself. Larger perspectives are required and purposeful government, far more dynamic and far sighted than the faction-riven administration that Maharashtra suffers today.

Shame

'The Illustrated Weekly of India', 27-5-1984
By Pritish Nandy,

It does not really matter who or what sparked it off. What matters is that it should have happened at all.

And that too, in a city like Bombay where the administrative machinery has always prided itself in its efficiency, its pre-emptive striking power.

Manslaughter, arson, loot, the incredible savagery wrought by man on man, in the name of religion: the recurring tragedy of Bhiwandi will remain to haunt us for years. Like many other memories that scar our conscience. But what hurts more than anything else is the extent of brutality involved. The burning alive of people: the sheer savagery of hate.

Was it pre-planned? Where did all the arms come from? Why has it taken so long to bring the riots under control? Did the police take sides? Which community

suffered more ? Time may or may not reveal the answers to these questions. And, as in the past, the administration, or whatever we have under that name, will try and gloss over them. The different political parties like vultures, will feed on the carcass, each trying to draw some petty, short-term gain for itself. The bullies of the communal fringe will walk around with their chests puffed out, claiming to have fulfilled their spiritual duties. The only sufferers will remain, as they have always been, the poor and the destitute who have nowhere to go, no one to reach out to.

The hoodlums and the gangsters will gain. Protected by an inept administration; encouraged by a system that is callous and irresponsible, accountable to no one.

The prime minister, during her visit to the troubled sites where she listened to the sordid tales of murder and mayhem and was told about the administration's total failure to contain the explosive situation, was clear in her mind that the state government had no need to resign over Bhiwandi. The Chief minister of Maharashtra has, till now, not even found the need to own moral responsibility for the tragic events and the inability of his government to control the spread of the riots. Buck passing, a political fine art, has started even in a matter as crucial as this.

The excuses and pretexts will come soon enough. The accusations, too. Another intense human tragedy will be come grist to the political mill. Votes will be won and lost. Donations will be collected. Relief funds will be offered, to buy the silence of those who have lost all that they once had. The political market place will be active once again : only, this time, the votes might become a bit more expensive.

This has been the inevitable pattern.

But can we afford to forget Bhiwandi ?

Can we afford to forget the way the government in power has allowed the riots in Bombay to continue for days on end ? Can we afford to forget the way people were roasted alive or butchered by armed gangs that walked the streets openly and defiantly, unafraid of the forces of law and order ? Or were they protected, aided and abetted by these same forces ? Is there any hope that we can ever lick this problem of communal violence ?

I don't think so. Not unless we have the will to do so. And not unless we can use every moral weapon we have in our armoury to make our governments more accountable, our law enforcing agencies more responsible. Slogans and pretexts have been the secret arms of a callous ruling elite, which has rarely been seriously concerned with the welfare of those over whom it lords. It is this callousness we must fight. Otherwise, many more Bhiwandis and Moradabads, many more Nellies will keep occurring. Many, many more people will be killed on the pretext of religion, caste, community. The violence will grow all around us, while its perpetrators will walk the streets as free men, their heads held high.

It is time for us, therefore, to be ashamed of our own silence.

It is also time for us to be angry. Angry with the men who have committed such heinous crimes. And also with those who have stood by and watched them. Watched them maim, murder, loot, burn, destroy.

Only our anger may scare them. Only your anger and mine may force the authorities to act. To see that such terrible things are not allowed to happen again and again.

On The Brink

Editorial, 'Times of India', 21-5-1984

After Nellie in Assam last year, Bhiwandi in Maharashtra now. Indeed, Bhiwandi is a worse horror even if the number of victims is much smaller. Nothing like this has ever been witnessed in independent India after the holocaust following partition. The psychology behind the crime is so alien as to be incomprehensible. To say that communal clashes have become virtually endemic in this industrial suburb of Bombay is to say little of any relevance in the present context. The roasting alive of over a score of fellow Indians is not another communal clash. It is materialisation of hell on earth. While the horror is a fact, it is impossible to believe that this could have happened in any civilized society. It feels like a terrible dream. But we have witnessed an even worse horror — the horror of indifference to the tragedy in Bhiwandi.

If our moral sensibilities had not been so benumbed as they appear to be, two developments would have taken place on Saturday afternoon when the gruesome crime on the outskirts of Bhiwandi became public knowledge. First, the news would have sent such powerful shock waves at least in Bombay and its environs that even the worst communalists and gangsters acting in concert with them would have abandoned their plans to kill and burn. Nothing of the sort happened. In fact, the situation in Bombay took a turn for the worse on Saturday night so much so that at one stage it looked as if the police would not be able to cope with it and the authorities would have to call in the army. Secondly, the chief minister would have owned the moral resposibility for the tragedy, one of the most shameful in our recent history, and offered his and his government's resignation. Instead, he criticised some Urdu papers for the role they had played in inciting communal passions. This criticism might be

justified but it is irrelevant and, by design or otherwise it seeks to cover up the administration's failure.

We have supported Mr. Vasantdada Patil in the past in the conviction that in the circumstances of the ruling Congress party he is the best bet for the state. But the pertinent point now is that in the wake of the horror on the outskirts of Bhiwandi, he should have regarded it obligatory on his part to send in his papers to the governor. Perhaps it did not even occur to him that he should do so. This is another indication of the distance we have travelled — in the wrong direction — since independence. This is another expression of the deadening of our moral sensibilities and in a sense it is as frightening as the roasting alive of fellow citizens in Bhiwandi.

It can be argued that such a gesture on Mr. Patil's part would not have served any useful purpose. That would be a ridiculous argument. For one thing, the gesture would have been meaningful in itself as evidence that there are still politicians in this country who recognise such a thing as moral responsibility. For another, it would have helped dissipate the atmosphere of cynicism and aroused the conscience of others. Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri is still remembered for his resignation as minister for railways following a rail accident in the fifties. As it happened, Mr. Patil's responsibility can be pinpointed. To begin with, he allowed a Shiv Jayanti procession in Bhiwandi and thus reversed a 14 year old policy. And then his administration ignored the heated controversy between a section of the Urdu press and the Marathi press over the Shiv Sena chief. Mr. Bal Thackeray's allegedly anti-Muslim utterance and the tension building as a result of it. So he just cannot disown responsibility for what has happened.

Wider Malaise : But Mr. Patil's behaviour is symptomatic of a wider malaise. Political life in Maharashtra, as in much of the rest of India, has touched newer and

newer depths in recent years. Two comparisons come to mind — one of Nero playing music while Rome burnt and the other of the last days of the Moghul empire when princes, princesses and courtiers indulged in intrigue and merry-making as the British advanced and consolidated their rule. In place of the British, we have now the forces of anarchy on the march and the response of the ruling elite is very similar. Thus when large parts of Bombay and adjoining towns were ready to explode into flames, the state Congress leaders were wholly preoccupied with their fractional infighting and, of course, the loot that has become part of government these days. So only the innocent can be surprised that the administration failed to wake up to the gravity of threat to law and order even when, following an alleged insult to Mr. Bal Thackeray by a Congress legislator in Parbhani, different parts of Bombay were closed for two successive days on Wednesday and Thursday before riots broke out on Friday. Indeed it is irrelevant to speak of an administration in Maharashtra. Such a thing ceased to exist a couple of years ago as a result of the activities of political bosses at the helm.

In such a situation it is only natural that the ordinary citizens faced with threats to their lives and properties should look up to Mrs. Gandhi and the army to come to their rescue. We ourselves have been flooded with pleas that we urge the Prime Minister to come to Bombay at once and post the army in troubled localities. The performance of the Maharashtra police has been far from impressive. We do not give credence to reports that policemen have in certain cases sided with the marauders — they have invariably come from outside the affected localities — but the evidence of their lack of enthusiasm is too impressive for us to dismiss. Perhaps the murder of a sub-inspector of police and a head constable by anti-social elements out of personal vendetta on Friday might account for it partly. But be that as it may, the whole country has an enormous stake in an early return of

normalcy to Bombay, the nation's industrial commercial heart. The metropolis has hovered on the brink of a precipice for three long days. We cannot afford to see it collapse into the yawning abyss. Such a tragedy must be averted whatever it takes to do so, including an extensive deployment of the army. Too much damage has already been done to the confidence of the people in the efficacy of government There is no time to lose.

On The Brink

Letter to the Editor, 'Times of India', 2-6-1984 & 6-6-1984

Sir,

Your edit "On The Brink" (May 21/22) has made the public wonder whether it has been really written by such an eminent commentator as Mr. Girilal Jain. If it is, it is most unfortunate. You have placed the blame squarely on the chief minister and suggested that he ought to have offered his scalp to atone for the happenings. Why should Vasantdada Patil resign? The situation has been so confusing that his exit at that time would have given a handle to the gangsters to go whole hog to cause greater havoc. That dada continued to face the tragedy be-speaks of his boldness and shows that he is made of stronger stuff. Assuming he had followed your advice, what alternative did you anticipate ? A new leader ? That would take time and unleash a new tug-of-war amongst various factions.

You cannot apply the example of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. Those were different times and values meant more than positions of power. These days no one resigns unless he is rejected by the electorate or is directed by in high command which really means Mrs. Indira Gandhi. If one were to follow your logic, then all the chief ministers should have left office several times over

on account of countless crimes and administrative lapses that have become the rule these days.

Mr. Patil should be congratulated in allowing a Shiv Jayanti procession which went off without an incident. In fact he wanted all religious parties to carry on their activities without any fear of reprisal. What others could not or dared not do he did with confidence and success. He did not wish to gain any political mile-age.

— I. V. Mahbubani, Bombay.

Sir,

Your paper deserves praise for its extensive coverage of Bhiwandi and Bombay riots, and your balanced editorial. "On the Brink" (May 21) too. These riots have once again underscored that Gandhism was also consigned to flames along with the Mahatma's mortal remains. We have thrown to the winds his principles of tolerance and non-violence. The fruits of our national progress, if any, are likely to be destroyed if this canker of communalism is not eliminated.

Some people have been saying that since independence India's canoe has been directionless. I used to differ. But now, with utter pain, I feel as if it has drifted in a dangerous direction.

I fail to understand why a handful of mad monsters have been allowed to run riot and hold the whole nation to ransom. Most people are peace-loving. But their silence gives the impression that they subscribe to the viewpoints of the frenzied few. The saner elements should rise to the occasion and combat communal carnage.

— Jayant Krishna, Lucknow.

Sir,

I am afraid your front-page editorial "On The Brink", about the Hindu Muslim riots at Bhiwandi, Thane and

Bombay is not in keeping with the high traditions maintained by you. It seems to have been written more in anger than in anguish.

The trouble is that we have never been able to view the Hindu-Muslim riots in their proper perspective. We never go into the genesis of the riots because we do not want to face the realities.

You have talked of the failure of the Patil government and demanded the resignation of the entire cabinet. But you have slurred over the fact that the failure of Vasantdada's government is mainly due to the machinations of Mr. Antulay.

We forget or rather deliberately ignore the simple fact that because of Gulf money, common people among the Muslims are coming more and more under the influence of the fundamentalists. Added to this is another unpleasant fact that the underworld not only in Bombay but in almost all major cities of India is dominated by the Muslims. The concerted attacks on policemen and the killings of some police officials in Bombay are a proof of this.

— L. D. Bhatla, Bikaner.

Sir,

Your editorial "On the Brink" will find an echo in every heart. But your expectation that such terrible, indeed unprecedented, tragedy would have aroused the conscience of even the worst communalist is perhaps unrealistic. The sad truth is that even barbarous acts are sometimes being applauded in the name of religion. Extermination of such communal forces is the only remedy. But the government appears to be lukewarm in applying it.

As for the exit of the Maharashtra ministry on moral

grounds it is too much to expect in the present climate. None would own up his moral responsibility.

Informed public opinion and mass action alone can call to account those in power who are guilty of acts of omission and commission.

— **A. Wudood, Patna.**

Bhiwandi Carnage

'Times of India', 5-6-1984

Sir,

We the undersigned strongly denounce the communal forces that are responsible for the carnage in Bhiwandi, the killings in Bombay, and for fostering communal antagonisms in different parts of Maharashtra.

We condemn the failure of the police and the paramilitary SRP forces to protect the people who maintain them, and for harassing innocent citizens instead of restraining antisocial elements.

We demand an enquiry, on the basis of reports in several newspapers, of police personnel abetting violence and assault. Such actions go absolutely against the spirit of the Indian Constitution and the gravest view should be taken of such misdemeanour.

We demand a public explanation from the chief minister of Maharashtra for his irresponsibility in accepting the mere word of Bal Thackeray that two Urdu newspapers misquoted him, without himself checking up on the cassette recording of Mr. Thackeray's reportedly provocative speech.

The chief minister must also explain his refusal to

accept the veracity of the facts regarding the Ansaribagh massacre at Bhiwandi as reported in several newspapers, and his refusal to appoint an enquiry into the massacre.

Such irresponsible partisanship makes the self-proclaimed secular character of this government highly suspect in our eyes. It is moreover, extremely disquieting to us to note the government's failure to take any action against persons who have been making statements in public, especially in the last six months, that are blatantly communal. We also find it incomprehensive how the government, despite the existance of its intelligence department, could have been ignorant of the situation developing in Bombay and Bhiwandi, especially after the Shiv Sena bandhs started on May 17.

We demand an enquiry into the conduct of various political parties and activists, especially of the Shiv Sena, the Bhiwandi unit of the BJP, and the Muslim League and the Jamat-e-Islam, in Bombay and Bhiwandi prior to and during this conflagration.

We call upon all citizens to refrain from being influenced by mischief-making communalists, and to come forward to aid all those thousands who have suffered on account of the rights. We congratulate all newspapers and newspapermen who have reported objectively on the recent riots.

— **Vijay Tendulkar**
K. A. Abbas
Govind Nihalani
Asghar Ali Engineer
Dinkar Sakrikar
Iqbal Masud
(CPDR, Bombay.)

Women's Plea

'Free Press Journal', 13-6-1984

The 10 days' rioting in Bombay, Trombay, Bhiwandi and nearby areas completely smashed the image of Bombay as the most cosmopolitan and liberal city in the country. Together with the image were shattered the lives of thousands of people belonging to a significant minority of the country — the Muslims.

The communal riots took different patterns in different areas. In certain areas, Hindu youths were supposedly given to understand that Hindus were being massacred by Muslims in other parts of the city. These rumours were fuelled further by chauvinistic reportage which, to give, just one example, mentioned the murder of constable Ghulam Sheikh as that of Gulabrao. In areas like Bhiwandi, the communal riots had another dimension to it — the recent organising of the powerloom weavers and the threat that posed to the super-exploitation by the powerloom owners.

One common pattern that emerges from all these various patterns, however, is that these riots were an attack on the poor, unorganised, helpless sections of the Muslim population, sections that were incapable of immediate retaliation and hitting back; sections without any political power or political pull.

This massive carnage however was not merely the handiwork of a few callous rightwing fanatics, but unfortunately received the passive support of the majority of the city. And that is the most dangerous aspect of the situation. Little do these passive supporters realise that if this vicious attack is allowed to go unchecked, it is going to boomerang, next time not only against the Muslims, but also against the Dalits, the tribals, non-Maharashtrians, against particular communities, weaker

sections and so on. It has to be nipped in the bud now or else there will be no end to the confidence of the callous chauvinists. Concrete plans at the level of residential areas, work-places, etc., need to be chalked out in order to get rid of this ever increasing threat and menace to any idea of a peaceful life.

The Forum also feels that the women of the minority community are the worst sufferers. They have to, on the one hand, struggle against the oppression that is specific to them as women of that particular community and, on the other, fight against the brutalities of the men of the majority community. We women from the Forum support the Muslim women in their dual errors and struggle.

The Forum also categorically condemns the recent human carnage and the tendencies that support and flame it.

— **Pamela Phillipose and others**
Forum Against Oppression of Women, Vile Parle (W), Bombay

Sena Leadr's Remarks Main Cause of Riots

'Indian Express', 10-6-1984

Certain statements made by a Shiv Sena leader was perhaps the primary cause of the riots in Bhiwandi and Bombay.

This was the views expressed by the people to the delegation of the All India Quami Ekta Committee, which went round the riot-hit areas of Bhiwandi and Bombay during the last two days.

Union Steel Minister N. K. P. Salve, who was the

leader of the delegation, told newsmen on Saturday, that in Bhiwandi people complained to the delegation that the Shiv Sainiks had systematically burnt down the hutments.

He described these riots as a "rare type" since miscreants and anti-social elements launched a systematic attack. In Govandi, Trombay and Bhiwandi the people feel that the army should stay for some more time. He said that the committee was going to ask Chief Minister Vasantrao Patil to augment the police force.

The other members of the committee include Ekta Committee Maulana Asararul Haque. Congress Committee joint secretary Mehmuda Khatun and Mr. I. Abdit, MP.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR, 'INDIAN EXPRESS', 14-6-'84

Sir,

I do not wish to comment upon the ugly communal riots that shook the very foundation of our much talked about secularism but then I would like to mention about the two places in the city which were entirely free from the riot situation.

We have two fishing villages in the city known as Danda and Versova which are mainly inhabited by Hindu fishermen. The Hindus and the Muslims in these villages have been living quite amicably for years together and even during the worst Hindu-Muslim riots that preceded and followed the partition these villages were all along free from any communal disharmony and tension.

In fact the Muslims residing in these villages look upon the fishermen as their protectors and the fishermen on their part have never failed Muslims and have seen that not a single Muslim in their village is ever harmed

by anyone. During the recent communal disturbances Muslims residing in Danda and Versova moved about quite freely and never thought of migrating anywhere.

I feel that the Hindus and the Muslims residing elsewhere should emulate the fishermen of Danda and Versova and should learn from them to live in harmony.

I strongly feel that the Government and more particularly some Muslim social organisations should honour the fishermen of Danda and Versova for protecting Muslims and their property even in the midst of great provocation from outside forces during the communal disturbances.

— **Dilshad M. Husein**
4-Napolina Society,
Versova Beach Road,
7-Bungalows, Bombay-400 061.

Against the Terror, Humanity

'Sunday Observer', 3-6-1984

As Deonar was caught in a conflagration, and Hindus and Muslims who had lived together in the same areas for years on end were fleeing their homes in anticipation of a reprisal, the people of both communities living in a chawl at Tatanagar resolved to jointly resist attacks directed against any one of them from "outsiders". In Shiv Shakti Nagar at Wasi and Roydas Nagar at Mulund, Hindus and Muslims have been keeping an all-night vigil to protect their shops and houses from being destroyed, ever since the riots began. At a time when the instinct for self-preservation overrides whatever feelings of affinity that exists even among members of the same community, Hindus and Muslims living in these areas still speak the language of humanity, and are able to say with warmth

that, "Hum insaniyat ke nathe ek dusre kaa sahara kar sakte hain."...

....It may have been the smallest gesture of the help, gestures that would be taken for granted in normal times — an urgent summon on to the fire brigade, offering shelter for a few days, even a word of assurance of sympathy — but on the strength of such acts does each community hope to retrieve the shreds of a shared pasts.

Eventually the Hindus and Muslims of Tatanagar and Roydas Nagar were helpless against the onslaught from outside, and many of them have had to leave their basis. The refugees whom I had met at the relief camps don't even know if their homes and properties have been spared. But in spite of this uncertainty, they say they have one resource to draw upon : a past that has been largely harmonious. Sayyed Mohammed Nazir is a resident of Roydas Nagar who has sought refuge at the relief camp in Musafir Khana, Crawford Market. He said, "I will definitely go back to my basti, though I can't say when. Most of the people living there are Hindus, but our relationship will not change, no matter what happens. We are mazdoors who have come from their states to earn some money, so that some day we can live comfortably in our own homes. Hum ko jaat, dharam, bhad bhav se koi matlab nahi".

The same refrain was echoed in the conversations I had with people in the Dalit strongholds, like the Matunga Labour Camp, one of the few places which has always remained totally free from communal tensions. Mohammad Habib, a tailor living in this area, said, "Anybody who was found guilty of fanning communal feelings in our area was castigated and punished by senior members of his own community. Even so this time things reached such a pass that we felt scared. So the Dalits called a meeting and told us not to lose our faith in their support."

It was timely assurances and moves of this kind from both communities that prevented the outbreak of trouble in some places and helped people to pull through trying circumstances in others. Najma and her husband who live in a chawl in Mahim comprising mainly Kolis, said that they had become desperate once the riots broke out, and wanted to move into a Muslim friend's place. "But our neighbours pleaded with us not to do this, because they felt we had lost confidence in their support and goodwill. To retain our good relations with them, we stayed back. For three or four days the boys in our building did our shopping, so that we did not have to risk leaving the house."

Madanpura, which like Matunga Labur Camp had never experienced communal clashes, was on the verge of erupting into one, had it not been for the determined stand taken by some Muslims. One of the residents recalled, "my family members and I were standing on the terrace and looking out. A boy was coming on a bicycle, and probably out of panic, he got off and began walking when he saw groups of men standing in street corners. At such times, despite the best relations the communities might have otherwise had, suspicion and hostility do surface. Some boys become wary of this chap and started questioning him. He was nervous and shaking all over. They even slapped him hard while he kept shouting all the time that he was innocent. I could not withstand the treatment this boy was being given, nor could the ladies in my family. We asked them to spare him. A Pathan identified him as a Hindu labourer who lived below Byculla bridge, and testified to his innocence."

Even when riots broke out, when trouble-makers were at large, there were individuals who risked their own lives to save the victims without giving a thought to the strong possibility of a backlash from the fanatics.

In Pydhoni, an employee of Ahmed Mecklai, a busi-

nessman, remembered how they had saved a Hindu from being assaulted by a group of rioters, some of who are staying in their locality. "On the 19th, at about four in the evening we were sitting inside the shop and carrying on a conversation to keep up our spirits, because Pydhoni was already under attack, though a bandh had not been officially declared. Suddenly we saw a man running towards our shop, absolutely panic-stricken. He was being chased by people who were carrying weapons. Since we knew some of these men, we explained to them that this man was our employee, and took him inside. After they left the place we took him to the police station where his wife was anxiously awaiting news of him."

Sheikh Wajid Ali, a timber merchant in Dharavi, said that when his shops and those of the others were set on fire, and a free-for-all was being staged on the street, a Maharashtrian scrap dealer, who had a go-down-cum-residence behind Ali's shop, had woken up, and on seeing the havoc caused, promptly telephoned the fire brigade. In Roydas Nagar, Mulund, Sayyed Nazir said that when stones were pelted at the masjid, some Hindus joined the Muslims in confronting the attack. Three of them were even hurt", he said.

In Pydhoni. Manubhai Soni, a goldsmith from Gujarat who was on a business trip to Bombay, was trapped in the area once the riots had started. His only acquaintances were Muslim dealers, but they sensed a threat to Soni's life if they were to put him up with them. "The safest place in such a situation, we thought, was our jamat," said a trustee of the Kathiawad Jamat. Soni was offered shelter at this Jamat for 15 days.

A Janata party activist (who desired anonymity) living in a basti near Siddeshwar Talav, Thane, said that he had given shelter to some 25 Muslims in his house for two days, because their properties were razed to the ground. "Thane, as you know, is a Shiv Sena stronghold.

But I have known many of these Muslims for years. A good friend of mine, who had worked with me in a cafe was murdered. Another friend's timber shop was set on fire, but some of us reached the place on time, and helped put cut the fire. The next day the remnants in his shop-were also looted. Mujhe ye sab bardasht nahi hua. I said no matter what happens I have to help these people. So I put them up at my place. I approached the SRP to help them reach their relatives and friends in Bombay.

Predictably, some of those who had offered help-mainly Hindus — have faced reprisals from the police and the Shiv Sena. The Janata party worker said, "A day after the refugees had left my place, some Sainiks came and looked around. They had warned me that they would take out a morcha against me in this basti, but I think the presence of the army prevented them from doing so."

At Muslim Nagar in Dharavi, when trouble broke out near Gosia Majid on the night of 21st, the police arrived and reportedly haulted people up indiscriminately. Sheela Karmani, a young housewife, said "I heard a lot of cries coming from the house of my neighbour, Fatime Bee. It was my farz to see what happened. I found that all the four male members in her family had been arrested. I was returning home, when a policeman stopped and asked my name. By now our basti-wallahs had woken up. A Muslim lady who lived near my house asked me to come and stay with her as there was no elderly male member in her family. The same policeman I had earlier met now came to her house and began to beat her little son. When I protested against this the cop wanted to know what I was doing there, and seemed to doubt if I really lived in that basti. I pointed out my house to him. He broke inside. and began to beat my brother, who was a victim of polio on the legs. When I took my brother to the doctor, he said that his legs were completely damaged. Since that day my brother became

depressed and kept on saying that he did not wish to burden himself on me any longer. One day I was sitting outside my house, talking to some friends.

The door was shut as my brother was having a wash. Suddenly we heard him shriek. When I opened the door I found that he had set himself on fire. He was admitted to the hospital with 80 per cent burns. He died two days later. What julum had I done just because I had enquired after a neighbour? For two days when I was in the hospital it was my neighbours who looked after my son, it was they who carried my brother's body to the crematorium. How can we say that we are each other's enemies ?"

Aside from the overt backlash of the kind which Sheela and the Janata party worker in Thane had to face, some relief workers found that political parties were trying to extract capital from the help rendered by them to the riot victims. TheJain Seva Sangh — a non-partisan charitable trust in Thane-had been feeding nearly 2000 refugees from Bhiwandi for eight days, apart from giving them medical help. "Every time we went to the bastis of the victims to feed them, the Congress (I), BJP. and Shiv Sena members insisted on accompanying us. Their presence naturally detered the Muslims from approaching us. but we can't say anything because the political parties are so powerful."

The Role of Shiv Sena

'Sunday Observer', 3-6-1984

Both K. F. Rustomji, member of the National Police Commission and Major General Rawat, incharge of army operations in riot affected areas, have stated that the riots were not communal in nature but caused by anti-social elements. Other factors seem to indicate that

they were not spontaneous outbursts by both communities, but planned riots. Bombay didn't see an orgy of widespread destruction in the first two or three days which gradually died out, but rather as one area erupted and calmed down, another started going up in flamed. Till the tenth day, the army was being called to new areas.

Old Bombay hands recall at least three communal conflicts in the last 15 years of a potentially serious nature which were prevented by the police from spreading beyond a few hours and a few kms. Other explosive situations were controlled by orders from the top even before they could get off the ground. What made the administration so lax this time?

Communal tension was being created over the last three months by the speeches Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray had been making all over Maharashtra. His Nasik speech is reported to have been even more vitriolic than the April 21 one at Chowpatty, and is said to have got a massive turnout. Yet no action was taken against him.

His Bombay speech was reported in the press two weeks after it was made, and the Parbhani reaction to it by Congress (I) M.L.A. A. R. Khan followed three weeks later. A week later, the Shiv Sena started enforcing a bandh in different areas of Bombay starting on Wednesday, May 16.

Shiv Sena boards abusing Muslims came up all over the city — the police did not remove them. The bandhs were over a communal issue — the police did not prevent them. As early as Thursday morning, businessmen, preferred to stay away from Pydhonie, fearing communal trouble, but the police remained unconcerned. Indeed, on Thursday evening, they allowed Shiv Sainiks to hold a rally at Chowpatty. That night, Bhiwandi started burning, and the first incident took place in Bombay, at

Kamathipura. Yet on Friday morning, the Shiv Sena bandh spread to Colaba and Fort, and in the afternoon, they took out a morcha in Worli denouncing Muslims. The same day, they stabbed a garage owner on Charni Road for not observing the bandh, and Central Bombay was affected by rioting; yet the next day, they were allowed to enforce a bandh in Bandra East.

Even 18 days after the riots started, Shiv Sainiks roam around free and fearless, threatening an even bigger blow-up if their chief is arrested for inciting communal violence. In one breath, Shiv Sena activists in Govandi point out their office attacked by a mob on May 18 afternoon, and pleade helplessness in front of the Muslim majority there; in the next breath, when asked about Thackeray's possible arrest, they reply, "The small incident in Parbhani resulted in this, now it is upto you to guess what Balasaheb's arrest could lead to". The same reply is given everwwhere — after all, the "spontaneous" anger of the Shiv Sena must not be under-estimated.

For, according to Senior SS leaders, it was the "spontaneous" anger of the "boys" over Parbhani that led to the bandhs. And it was in "Spontaneous" reaction to the rumour that Hindus had been massacred en masse at the start of the Bhiwandi riot that Muslims were attacked in Thane, and riots spread to Bombay. Yet, the first incident in Bombay took place before any major incident occurred in Bhiwandi — on Thursday night.

While almost all of Bombay has still to recover from the depression and fear these riots have spread, one section seems on top of the world — the local Shiv Sena leadership. They admit that "in a sense" the riots were a good thing — they taught the Muslim a lesson they'll never forget. The second reason they're so happy is the expectation of being regarded as the defenders of Hindus in a city like Bombay, unlike the RSS, who, according to them, are good for marches and prayers, not for real action.

When the Shiv Sena started in 1966, they projected themselves as defenders of Maharashtrian interests in Bombay against South Indian "encroachers". Thackeray would publish lists of South Indian executives in every issue of his magazine Marmik, count the number of South Indians listed in the directory. The campaign culminated in the Shiv Sena-S. Indian riots in 1969.

Over the years, this campaign yielded results: the Congress (I) passed rules stipulating 80 per cent employment for locals; and the SS formed Sthaniya Lok Adhikar Samitis (Local People's Rights Bodies) which saw to it that 'outsiders" had a tough time getting employment especially in banks.

The new target of the SS appears to be the Muslims. Thackeray was earlier in the RSS; he has always written about the "green danger" to India, and his first attempt at communal disharmony where none existed was in 1970 in Kalyan.

The hysteria whipped up by all parties over the Meenakshipuram conversions in 1982 was supported by the Shiv Sena, which had been discredited during the Emergency, and had been nothing but a Congress (I) follower till chief minister A. R. Antulay fell. Marmik now switched the content of its lists names of Muslims offenders compiled from police statics were published to prove that the majority of criminals in Bombay were Muslims. As the BPJ started overtly diluting its anti-Muslim stand, the Shiv Sena built up a campaign against Muslims culminating in its annual convention held in January. 1984 at Shivaji Park. There it was decided that the SS would only support those candidates in the next election whose slogan would be: "I am a Hindu and proud to be so", the slogan propagated by the Ekatmata Yatra.

On April 21, the Hindu Mahasangh was formed in

Bombay, under the presidentship of Thackeray and vice-presidentship of Vikram Sawarkar of the Hindu Mahasabha. It was an association of Hindu bodies like the Hindu Sena (described as the "militant wing" of the Hindu Mahasabha) : the Patit Pawan Sanghatana (active in the Hindu-Muslim riots in Pune in 1982 and Shahada in 1983, and responsible for the massacre of Adivasis in Dhule district, March, 1984); the Hindu Ekta Samiti, etc. All these organisations had been active in the BJP led anti-abattoir agitation in Bhiwandi last year, as well as the Shiv Jayanti procession.

What is the Shiv Sena's grudge against the Muslims ? From leaders to pramukhs to cadres, they repeat the same points : the Muslims are increasing because they marry four times and don't practise family planning; if they don't overtake us, they will at least carve out another Pakistan; they clap for Pakistan in cricket matches, hence they are traitors; in Bhiwandi, a Muslim majority town, Shivaji, regarded as a national hero by all and a god by the locals, cannot be honoured with a procession. "It is time Muslims were told that this is a Hindu majority state and they will have to respect the wishes of the majority".

So the Shiv Sena wants a common civil code which they feel will keep the growth of the Muslim population on par with the Hindus : and they have decided to inculcate patriotism among the Muslims. They themselves will prevent Muslims from bursting crackers when Pakistan win. "We want Muslims like Kirmani, who never leaves a catch offered by Zaheer Abbas," says Thackeray, or like Abdul Hamid who died killing Pakistanis in 1971".

The SS wrath seems to be fanned most by the sight of what they call "Muslim pockets" — Bhiwandi, Govandi, Bhendi Bazar, five areas in Thane (reduced by the riots to three according to a BJP leader), the stretch of slums from Bandra to Santacruz East. It is there, they feel,

that the Muslims seem to forget that they are after all a minority. "Every citizen must have some fear ruling him", said one leader, "fear of God first, then of parents, of country and then of society. The Muslims fear only their Allah."

"Until they change their aggressive attitude, riots will continue," said another senior leader. They see the apex of this attitude in Banatwalla's prediction of a blood-bath in Bhiwandi if the Shiv Jayanti procession was held there; and in Imam Bukhari's recent demand for Thackeray's externment from Bombay. The answer to this "aggressive attitude" is the militancy of the Maharashtrians, they say. "Because we are desecendants of Shivaji, we haven't allowed the Muslims to spread in Maharashtra," said one BJP leader.

In these riots, the BJP has played a quieter role — in Bhiwandi, where it has a large following in the town and in the nearby villages, it worked without drawing attention to itself. In Thane, it organised "self-defence" wherever necessary and left the offensive to be taken by the Shiv Sena. It is also organising legal aid there. In Bombay, it seems to have been dormant in the actual fighting, but active in getting the few Muslim police officers transferred.

When the SS started, it was rejected by the upper-caste and upper class Maharashtrians, as well as Dalits; its appeal was restricted to the "intermediate" castes, the unemployed and the lumpen youth. It was strongly anti-Left; managements used it to break strong unions. It was also very anti-Dalit.

Over the years, many high-caste young men have got jobs through it. It had licences granted to boys to run Limca and batatawada stalls; it helped dadas build up slums; it offered protection to some unauthorised hawkers; wherever it won municipal elections, it spruced up the

area. Today its following cutsacross caste and has spread to the middle class as well as to Dalits — every anti-Muslim article in Marmik begins with a quote from Ambedkar.

But while SS loyalists actually fought in these riots in many (not all) areas, they found moral support from other Hindus. The many stories of Hindus having sheltered Muslims notwithstanding, in adopting a militant anti-Muslim stand, the SS has finally found a voice echoed by a section of the Hindus. They may be disgusted by its methods, but not by its objective — to show the Muslims their place.

Petty shopkeepers whose clientele is largely Muslim agree with the SS small businessmen who have shared a mutual dependence with Muslim businessmen for decades and who even attend their marriages, etc. talk of Muslim personal law being at the root of the riot. Business, of course, goes on as usual, except temporarily in small kirana shops or dispensaries. There too, fear keeps one community away and then only in "border" areas where the two localities meet.

In areas where Muslims are in a minority and have been driven out — Thane the chawls of Mulund and Bhandup — refugees talk of never going back and of returning to their villages. Where well-off families have had their homes destroyed, they talk of going back and rebuilding, but wonder when the next attack will come. Many of these families have had excellent relations with their neighbours from the other community, but the latter were warned not to interfere; in one case in Thane, parents could not prevent their Shiv Sainik sons from destroying their neighbour's house.

The riots have proved Bombay's cosmopolitanism" superficial. In many "mixed" areas, Hindus and Muslims have never visited each other's homes. It is only where

the youth have made a conscious efforts to cultivate each other that real cosmopolitanism seems to have prevailed. On such street is in Byculla, with a Muslim majority and "pockets" of Hindu buildings. All the ingredients of a clash were present : an offensive SS board was smashed up, bottles were thrown at one building, but a few boys from either side restrained the rest of their community, formed a peace committee, informed the police of potential troublespots, the police cooperated, and no riot took place.

With Ramzan having started bazars will be busy every evening in "Muslim pockets" and the Muslims are pleading that the military remain till Id. The police have lived up to their pro-Shiv Sena reputation. The Congress (I) has emerged as the saviour of the Muslims here, and the Shiv Sena of the Hindus. Many slums have been levelled and vacant lands created many tenants have been evicted; shops looted. Flags have sprung up all over the city, and no one dares pull them down: trade unionists despair at the way workers talk about each other; dadas and goondas have become community heroes. Bombay may not be the same again.

Police During The Riots

'Sunday Observer', 3-6-1984

The Bombay police had the first inkling of impending trouble on Tuesday, May 15, when an effigy of MLA Abdul Rehman Khan was burnt at Parel by the Shiv Sena. On May 16, the Sena planted anti-Muslim boards all over the city, and its bandh protesting the insult to Sena chief Bal Thackeray in a Muslim procession in Parbhani went into its second day. Retaliation, said Bombay police commissioner Julio Ribeiro, came in the form of"anti-Thackeray boards by someone called Salim Khan 'Chuha'."

On May 18, the city blew up and caught the police in the nape, in spite of the mobilisation of the force on May 16. By the time the army called on the night of May 19 to curb rioting at Govandi, the Bombay police had spent four days on its feet.

There were three methods the police used to deal with the riots; by bandobasts, which were spread out so thin that rioters mostly broke through; by using what they call "maximum force", and by "deals" of mutual peace with the underworld for the duration of the riots.

Of the 26,000 men on the police force in Greater Bombay, 2,000 are on permanent duty guarding VIPs. Half of the rest are concentrated in South Bomboy. About 40 per cent of the force is on rotational leave at any given time. That left about 14,400 men (7,200 per shift) on actual duty during the riots, plus another 822 raw recruits who were hustled out on beats one day before before their passing-out parade.

The riots taxed the city police force to its maximum and beyond. After the second day of rioting, it was painfully evident that the police could not counter the organised pattern of the riots with its own strategy. As soon as violence was contained in one locality, it burst out in another, taxing the force's mobility.

There was, of course, another side to it; Ribeiro conceded that intelligence was inadequate. "But then," he said, "if you expect my men to infiltrate the mobs and inform us before the trouble started, you are asking for too much."

Bandobast, however, was far weaker than it had been during the Samant-led mills strike of 1982. While 14 companies (1,400 men) of the State Reserve police roamed the streets of the city for a full year during the strike (beefed up to 19 companies during Samant's jail bharo

campaign), there were only five SRP companies during the riots. The police were totally unprepared.

There are also allegations that the roits took time to peter out because of active police complicity with the Shiv Sena. Two instances, at least-Cheetah Camp and Kasaiwada in Kurla east-fortify the contention.

The official version of the Cheetah Camp incident is that the police opened fire on May 23 to disperse a violent mob which attacked the police station with bottles, fire-balls, lathis, swords and bricks. The residents of the Camp say that the police entered the camp and went berserk, dragging people out of homes and shooting them at close range.

The maximum number of rounds during the riots were fired at Cheetah Camp that day. Of a total of 51 rounds, 31 found their marks, killing eight people and injuring 23. The ratio of rounds to injuries remains unprecedented, and is evidence of either marvellous sharpshooters in the police force or of firing at close range. Till this incident, the maximum number of rounds, 32, had been fired at Kamathipura on May 19, during three hours of uncontrollable violence, with no deaths reported.

There was no evidence at the Cheetah Camp police station of a seige the previous day. DCP Y. C. Pawar, in charge of the area, said that the police station was un-damaged because trees around the building screened it from missiles.

Commissioner Ribeiro said that the police had not gone on the rampage. "There would have been evidence of powder burns and clean holes if they had been shot at point blank range," he said. The post mortem reports, however, have yet to be prepared.

DCP Pawar said that the Cheetah Camp police had gone on a house-to-house search after the firing. "It is the established convention. What do you do when people refuse to open their doors for a search ? You break them down." Emphasising the point, he spoke of how he had "asked my men to bring to me all the trouble makers in Bainganwadi (in Govandi) and I would have them shot like dogs on the spot. I told them that I would take the responsibility for the action."

Police officials say blandly that some extra-legal "maximum force" had to be used at Cheetah Camp to contain the increasing number of criminals taking shelter in the area. The Camp has long been known as Bombay's "safe house" for externees and criminals on the lam. (In fact, a small area in the Camp is informally known as Tadipad Nagar. Externees Camp).

In fact, Lalitha Rao, state health minister, was accused of having in some way incited the police to take action at Cheetah Camp. The Minorities Cell of the BRCC I) verbally assaulted Rao — in the presence of BRCC (I) chief Murli Deora and AICC (I) general secretary Chandulal Chandrakar — saying that she had personally given instructions to the Trombay police to arrest the Trombay taluka Congress (I) general secretary, Haroon Sanjar, and Vice-President of the Minorities Cell Mohammed Ali Wasi. Her instructions were said to have given the police the go-ahead.

Police sources say that extermination procedures are often set moving during disturbances, when police hits can be justified as riot control. Something of the sort seems to have taken place at Cheetah Camp. DCP Pawar said that the two most notorious men in the area, Lambu Alim and Haroon Sanjar (also a Special Executive Magistrate), remain free, although they were leading participants in the riots.

Another such incident took place at Kasaiwada in Kurla east on the night of May 20. A mob from Teen Nal, a Shiv Sena stronghold locates across the railway tracks in Kurla west, attacked Kasaiwada around mid-night. An inspector and three armed constables at Kasaiwada naka, according to an eyewitness account, disappeared just before the incident developed.

The mob attack started with fireballs and stones, after which four rounds were said to have been fired from the Teen Nal side, injuring a boy in the thigh. He was bundled into a taxi to be taken to hospital when two police vans homed in on the Kasaiwada crowd which had turned out after the Teen Nal mob began its attack. One van sped in from Chunabhatti in the north of the area, the other from the Swadeshi Mill Road in the south. It was a neat pincer move. The police first fired in the air and then into the crowd.

The eyewitness said that the injured boy was left alone in the taxi when the others helping him scampered away. He was dragged out of the right side rear door of the car by the police, taken into a van and allegedly shot twice. Four people were killed in the firing. Led by three inspectors, the police allegedly battered the arrested people with rifle butts.

A delegation of six Muslims from Kasaiwada complained to union minister of state for home Venkatsubbiah, shipping minister Z. R. Ansari and commissioner Ribeiro.

Police sources say that commissioner Ribeiro was aware of the communal bias in the police force but was unable to suppress it. A full 80 per cent of the city police consists of Maharashtrian Hindus, and the rest are a smattering of Christians and Muslims.

In fact, the most brazen instance of communal prejudice emanated from the police head-quarters : for the

first four days of the riots, the police press bulletin named the Hindu victims in full, while referring to Muslims as "members of the other community."

After a journalist embarrassed Mrs. Gandhi during a press conference by demanding an explanation of the bias, and AICC (I) general secretary Rajiv Gandhi upbraided inspector general of police Medhekar in public, evidence of the bias was done away with. Commissioner Ribeiro told the press that "earlier there were constables writing out the press bulletins. Now we have a DCP on the job." Thereafter, victims were identified only as those of "one community" or "the other community".

The least advertised method of riot control used by the police was "deals" of peace with the under-world. The one thing that the police and the underworld had in common was an overwhelming desire for normalcy, each for its own reasons. Therefore, Agripada, where Senaites have installed themselves check-to-jowl with Muslims over the years, was almost incidentfree even as neighbouring Nagpada ignited. Apparently, Yusuf Malabari, Haji Mastan and Yusuf Patel agreed to place a blanket ban on rioting in the area. Volatile areas like Gulalwadi and Madanpura were preternaturally quiet. Ganglord Varadarajan Mudaliar kept Dharavi largely trouble-free. Charnala in Dongri, which is the godown area for stolen goods from the docks and of smuggled items, was normal, although in the docks the Shiv Sena used the riots as an umbrella to attempt a takeover of the pilferage business from established Muslim gangs.

Will police officers and constables be nailed for communal bias during the riots? It may be recalled that after the Madan Commission's report on the 1970 Bhiwandi riots, which reported dereliction of duty by police officers, some officers were hauled up. But the punishment imposed on them was incredible.

Said member of Parliament G. M. Banatwala, then a member of the state legislative assembly, "I raised a question in the assembly of what was done with the police officers found guilty. I was told that action had been taken against them. When I asked what action, I was told that they had been fined. When I asked how much, I was told Rs. 10 each, with Re. 1 to be deducted every month from their salaries."

View point of the Police :

On being questioned about this one of the police officials told us that one cannot entirely rule out the allegations of partial behaviour on the part of the police. They do have their prejudices and weaknesses. However, it would not be fair to accuse entire police force of being partial. Much depends on police officer on duty. The strength of police officer on duty. The strength of police is not enough to control such vide spread disturbances. The police is in demand by every one who fears attack and it is impossible to send police wherever there is fear of attack, imaginary or real. Moreover people tend to exaggrate their grievances against the police. Moreover for the police during such disturburances there are very exacting duty schedules and they are fatigued on over worked. They face many challenges and irritating situations. So, psychology of police often clashes with that of the people. If one keeps these things in mind one will not pass very harsh about the role of the police.

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We are giving below a memorandum submitted by the delegation of representatives from various Muslim organisations to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra after visiting the riot-affected areas.

A delegation consisting of representatives from various Muslim organisations recently visited riot-affected areas of Maharashtra and made an on the-spot study. It also met the riot-victims in some of the relief camps and hospitals and talked to some officials and non-officials.

Following is a memorandum given to the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr. Vasantdada Patli, by the above delegation.

"It is wrong to suggest that the May 18, 1984 (Black Friday's) flare-up was so sudden and spontaneous. You had intelligence report about the mounting communal tensions in Thane District, particularly in Bhiwandi, even after the peaceful passing of the Shiv Jayanti celebration of May 3. The newspapers carried reports of bandhs and processions and certain journals carried provocative reportings.

"It is equally wrong to assume that provocative writings and inflammatory speeches during the last two months only have made the masses so fanatic and rebellious. Mr. Bal Thackeray alone is not to blame for this tragic state of affairs. The thought of social superiority, domination of one community over the others and regional and linguistic feelings have been gaining ground slowly but steadily ever since Independence. Politicians have only capitalised upon this base mentality and human passions.

"As the followers of Islam, we firmly believe that mankind is the family of our Creator and Master and that we are all brothers. One can be superior to the other only by virtue of his piety and righteousness, conduct and character — not by his accidental birth in a particular race, community or religion or his speaking a particular language or possessing a particular colour.

"We are pained to point out that your state has become a bastion for initiating and spreading views and philosophy contrary to the aforesaid truth. So long as these thoughts are allowed to spread and drastic action not taken to root them out from the minds of the people, we are afraid nay, rather convinced no abiding peace can be restored !

"The highly perturbing event of the services of communal carnage in the State is the one relating to the Mazagaon Dock Ltd. in Bombay under your very nose occurring on May 24 six days after the commencement of the riots when the Army was already called out. In the afternoon between 1.30 to 2.30 p.m. hundred of rioters had full control over the warship 'INS-GANGA' under construction there by thousands of workers. The rioters washed their dirty hands with the blood of innocent Muslims in the 'INS-GANGA'. At least 22 Muslims, including an unfortunate non-Muslims Bhandari due to wrong identification, have been grievously hurt having their heads and ribs broken, hands and legs fractured and face, chest and back damaged.

"The Muslim employees had alerted the management two days before and were assured all security. Where were the Security Guards with their guns and what were the precautionary security arrangements made in an establishment manufacturing defence worships ? We do hope that this shameful incident — a unique one of its kind in the history of communal riots in India — will be thoroughly got investigated and the management taken to task.

"The happenings of Ansari Bagh where 27 innocent souls were butchered and burnt even while the victims were struggling for life brings to light an important factor that the licenced arms of Mr. Ibrahim Ansari did

protect his life and of those women and children taking shelter under his roof.

It needs little emphasis that the law and order machinery including the Intelligence and the Fire Brigade have not only failed miserably in discharging their duties but also in a few cases connived with the miscreants and even found engaged at some places, in subversive activities.

This is a serious allegation and needs a high-level investigation. The entire machinery also needs to be reorganised giving due representation to minorities in each branch proportionate to their population. This will not only end the long injustice done to minorities but will also help perventing these important branches from becoming one-sided. We hope you will consider this aspect with all seriousness.

The heavy toll of life and loss of property incurred by the tax payers is the result of the criminal negligence of the administration, particularly the law and order machinery. Justice demands that full compensation is paid to the victims and sufferers, if need be, by imposing collective fines and raising Government loans. A High Court Judge may be appointed to fix the quantum of damages in each case.

"There are still complaints of police passivity and inactivity in investigation prosecution and impartial dealing of all F.I.R.s. Attempts to recover looted property and arrest the culprits still at large are few and far between. Ends of justice cannot be met and the lost confidence in police cannot be restored unless and until the law and order machinery raises up to the occasion and desists from harassing innocent Muslims only to maintain parity.

"Providing shelter to the homeless and employment to those rendered jobless are indeed stupendous tasks. Several philanthropists and organisations including the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind are extending their full support in this regard. Besides the construction work at Bhiwandi, so switftly undertaken hundreds of houses have to be built at all other affected places. We request you to undertake this building activity on a water footing before the monsoon sets in.

"There are hundreds of widows and orphans with no one to look them after. The responsibility rests with the government to take care of them. Life pensions for widows and educational and employment facilities to the orphans ought to be extended on humanitarian basis most liberally.

"Enduring and lasting peace cannot be guaranteed unless and until the administration takes right action at the right time. One of the most serious issues is provocating members of one community against the other and attacking upon its religious personalities, rites and rituals. The process of law is not set in motion despite repeated representations, memoranda and reminders.

"We hope, the lesson of the present communal holocaust will not be ignored and matters allowed to be taken to the streets. Prompt and immediate action against all provocative writings and inflammatory speeches must be initiated aganist all concerned, however, high they are placed."

Casualties Reported by The Government

'Times of India' 11-7-1984

Total number of deaths in the riots	278
Total number of persons injured	1,115
Total number of persons arrested	11,453
Total damage	Rs. 7.66 crores

Note : The above data was given by the minister of state for home (Maharashtra) in the Legislative assembly on 10th July, 1984.

We are presenting here in chronological order, the number of persons killed. injured and arrested in the riot-affected areas. The first table gives the figures as reported by the press and the relevant authorities, while the second table is based on the information collected by us in our fact-finding investigations.

FIGURES REPORTED BY AUTHORITIES AND PRESS

Date	Name of the area	Reported Casualities Dead		Injured		No. of Arrested		Whether Army Called in
18.6.84	Bhiwandi	8	(TOI)	100	(TOI)	250	(TOI)	Bhiwandi
				125	(FPJ)	500	(IE)	
	Thane			7		250		Govandi
	Govandi	1		2				
	V.T.-Phule Market					5		
	Phydhonie	1						
19.6.84	Bhiwandi	48	(IE)	119		518		
		27	(TOI)					
	Thane					47	(IE)	
	Bombay	6	(SO)	20	(SO)	63	(IE)	
		10	(TOI)	44	(TOI)			
	Nagpada			14	(SO)			
	Govandi					50		
20.6.84	Bhiwandi			200				
	Govandi							Bombay
	Bombay	22						
	Kherwadi			5				
	Kalyan	3						
	Thane	3				65		
21.6.84	Sion			1				
	Bombay	6				40		
	Bhiwandi	13						
	Kalyan	2						

Date	Name of the area	Reported Casualities Dead		Injured	
21.5.84	Jogeshwari	9			
	Majaswadi Baiganwadi	1		1	
22.5.84	Mohamed Ali Rd.			1	
	Mulund	2			
	Vikroli	3			
	Bhayander	4			
	J. J. Hospital			4	
	Govandi Thane	1			
23.5.84	Trombay	8		14	
	Bombay	53	(FPJ)	179	(Total)
		47	(TOI) (Total)		
	Bharatnagar				
	Howrah Express			17	
	Barve Nagar	1		1	
	Dongri & Lalbaugh	2			
	Bhiwandi	21			
		87	(Total)	199	(Total)
	Thane	19	(Total)	140	(Total)

No. of Arrested	Whether Army Called in
	Majaswadi
88	
150	Mulund, Ghatkopar, Vikroli, Bhandup. Kherwadi, Nagpada, Agripada
3,560 (in all)	

Date	Name of the area	Reported Casualities Dead — Injured			
23.5.84	Kalyan	10	(Total)	105	(Total)
	Kinawali	1			
	Ghatkopar	3		1	
	Bhayander	2			
	Vikroli	1			
24.5.84	Bhiwandi				
	Thane and Kalyan				
	Mazgoan Dock			22	
	Thane	16		1	
	Jogeshwari			2	
	Bombay	54	(Total)	16	
	Thane	30	(Total)		
	Vartak Nagar	13			
	Trombay				
	Mandvi				
	Parel	1			
	Ghatkopar	1			
	Andheri (W).				
	Cheetah Camp.	22		150	
	Bhayander	4			

No. of Arrested	Whether Army Called in
19	
61	
800	
	Thane Rural.
100	
	Mandvi.
24	
26	

Date	Name of the area	Reported Casualities Dead	— Injured
25.5.84	Bhiwandi	16	
	Mulund		1
	Thane Rural	1	
	Bhandup		
26.5.84	Bhandup	4 (Daily)	9 (Daily)
	Mulund		
	Sion		31
	Khindipara		
	Thane	6	
	Bhiwandi	1	
	Shubhash		
	Nagar	2	
	Dongri		
	Reay Road		
27.5.84	Parel		2
	Cheetah Camp		2
	Kherwadi		2
	Trombay		1
	Kurla		
	Antophill	1	1
	Bharat Nagar		1

No. of Arrested	Whether Army Called in
7	
9	
20	
18	
1	
6	
1	
14	

Date	Name of the area	Reported Casualities Dead	Injured	No. of Arrested	Whether Army Called in
28.5.84	Parel	2			
	Masjid Bunder	1	2		
	J.J. Hospital	1			
	Bhandup	2	3		
	Worli	6			

TOI — Times of India.
SO — Sunday Observer.
FPJ — Free Press Journal.
IE — Indian Express.

Total number of deaths	258	
Total number of injured	1066	
Total number of arrested	8977	
Total number of army jawans deployed	3500	
Number of army jawans deployed in Bhiwandi	1000	
Number of army jawans deployed in Bombay	2500	
Total amount of destruction of properties	Rs. 200	crores

NOTE : The above figures are the reported casualities during first 10 days of the major riots (i.e. 18th May to 27th May, 1984).

Date	Place	Number of Deaths			Number of Injured			Number of Arrested			Destruction of Properties	Remarks
		Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total		
18-5-84	Thane	0	104	104				0	306	306	Two saw mills burnt, a truck burnt about 100 godowns, timber mart and bakeries burnt. 10-15 houses looted; A mosque completely burnt. 2 houses demolished; 7-8 hotels and shops also burnt; 6 garages destroyed	One girl raped. 4 girls missing
	Naibasti	1	29	30							4000 houses looted and burnt.	
	Azmi Nagar	0	10	10							3,500 structures demolished and looted.	
	Govandi (Shivaji Nagar)	0	3	3				2	36	38		
	Baigan Wadi	0	5	5			10				mosques stoned; many huts looted.	
	Parel										10 houses burnt. 40 houses destroyed 30 garages looted.	

Date	Place	Number of Deaths			Number of Injured			Number of Arrested			Destruction of Properties	Remarks
		Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total		
18-5-84	Ghungat Nagar				0	4	4				Godowns looted; many houses destroyed, I hotel looted.	4 children missing
	Rasulabad	0	9	9							10 pucca structures burnt, 3 chawls demolished, 1000 huts demolished, 45 houses looted, Taher Baug destroyed.	
	Tagore Nagar	0	2	2				0	16	16	Mosque damaged.	
	Tembhipada										5-6 Muslim houses damaged 1 Tailoring shop & a bakery shop were looted, damaged & burnt.	
	Subhash Nagar	0	2	2								
	Pathan Colony Hanuman Nagar	0	1	1				0	52	52	8 shops looted and damaged.	

Date	Place	Number of Deaths			Number of Injured			Number of Arrested			Destruction of Properties	Remarks
		Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Tota	Hindu	Muslim	Total		
18-5-84	Mulund			5							8 timber shops burnt, houses and shops looted and gutted.	
	Gori Pada	0	1	1							5 houses and 1 hotel burnt, 27 houses looted, 1 scooter burnt.	
	Ansari Baug	0	29	29							The bungalow burnt.	
19-5-84	Jogeshwari East.	2	3	5	0	1	1				50 huts looted, 4 houses looted, Air condition shop and a bakery looted.	
	Bandra East	—	8	8	—	12	12	—	65	65	1 Bakery looted & burnt.	
	Kamatipura	1	1	2	—	20	20	—	20	20	Bakery burnt and looted, Godown burnt.	
21-5-84	Bhandup										5-6 houses burnt and looted. Bakery looted and damaged.	
22-5-84	Ghatkopar	2	4	6	—	—	1 (Christian)				One car, a Taxi one rick-shaw and shop looted.	

Date	Place	Number of Deaths			Number of Injured			Number of Arrested			Destruction of Properties	Remarks
		Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total	Hindu	Muslim	Total		
22-5-84	Bhayandar	2	4	6	8	2	10	26	1	27	Bakery, Mosque, 4-5 bhangar shops, one vegetable shop looted and demaged.	
	Jawahar Nagar	—	15	15				—	50	50	Mosque attacked, houses broken, 50-60 houses looted.	
23-5-84	Cheeta Camp	—	13	13	—	1	1	—	157	157		
	Vikhroli										Masjid badly damaged, 3-4 houses looted, factory looted.	
	Central Bombay										5-6 Muslim shops, Milk-shop, a bakery and a travel agency attacked and looted.	

NOTE : According to a reliable source total number of deaths in Bhiwandi is 500 of which 400 Muslims and 100 Hindus. The total number of persons arrested in Bhiwandi is 1350 of which 400 Hindus and 950 Muslims.

Destruction of Properties and Rehabilitation Carried Out

BHIWANDI—PROPERTY LOSSES

(Excerpts from 'Economic Times' 10, June)

The wave of communal violence. which swept Bhiwandi and Bombay three weeks ago, destroyed and damaged more than 300 medium and small industrial units, about 850 shops and a dozen godowns, about 10,000 slum houses and about 500 pucca houses — together valued at over Rs. 20 crores.

While Bhiwandi and its environs accounted for at least half of this loss, Greater Bombay and parts of Thane city and talukas accounted for the rest of the loss in the mass frenzy. More than 200 powerloom units, four sizing plants, one cloth processing house, four large warehouses, 300 shops; eating houses, spare-parts stores, bakery units; biscuit factories, in addition to a couple of thousand kutcha and pucca houses were razed to ground at Bhiwandi town, accounting for a total capital loss of about Rs. 6 crores.

The loss of production caused due to the disruption of goods transport and public conveyance and the resultant holding up of supplies and non-attendance of workers at more than 800 large and medium units and several thousands of small units in Greater Bombay and Thane has been put at more than Rs. 200 crores. The production loss at Bhiwandi's 2.5 lakh powerlooms, which ground to a halt in the wake of the riots, has been estimated at over Rs. 40 crores. These powerloom units, which used to work two shifts of 12 hours each, have been able to resume only one shift so far, leaving little hope of improving the production level during the next three or four months.

Though the estimated total loss of production is colossal, at least a part of this can eventually be made up by accelerating the wheels of production. But this by itself

would not be able to undo the chain effects of the setback caused to different segments of the economy. For instance, several hundreds of exporters have lost export orders at a rate of Rs. 6 crores a day for well over two weeks, owing to the expiry of letters of credit, as they could not transport their cargo to ports from different production centres in time. The total export loss has been put at over Rs. 70 crores.

Besides, numerous exporters of textiles and garments could not fulfil their export commitments and hence had to seek extension of time, as their source of raw materials in Bhiwandi went dry. The nationwide role being played by Bhiwandi in supplying textiles to export efforts can be understood from the fact that numerous exporters from as far as Madras and Calcutta, in addition to those from Bombay, have now approached the textile commissioner's office seeking postponement of their commitment date.

Those in the import business have not been spared either. As a result of non-clearance of imported cargo from the docks and warehouses for want of road transport, they have had to cough up additional demurrage on their consignments to the tune of Rs. 3 crores daily for many days. According to some sources, the number of cargo packages stockpiling at the Bombay docks had almost doubted at about 10 lakhs all within a week of the commencement of the riots. The cascading effects of this clogging on industrial costs is anybody's guess.

Production at more than 150 textile processing houses and numerous other dyeing and printing units in Bombay and Thane districts have virtually ground to a halt following the holocaust, not only due to disruption in goods transport and dislocation of labour, but due to near total stoppage of raw-material supplies from Bhiwandi. Many processing houses have already begun laying off their workers as they saw no hope of returning to normalcy at Bhiwandi during the next couple of months.

While major units in the five industrial zones viz. Thane-Belapur belt, Thane-Kalyan-Dombivli belt, Taloja-Panvel-Nhava Sheva belt, Bessein-Bhayandar-Mira Road belt and the Greater Bombay industries belt consisting of the areas of Kurla, Mulund, Andheri and Borivli have managed to operate their units even in the worst of communal tension, with numerous localities under curfew, by providing transport facilities to their employees, thousands

of small and medium sized units have had to down their shutters for varying periods.

A survey by this correspondent of the Thane-Belapur industrial belt has shown that staff attendance at the big units often declined to 50 per cent, while that at medium and small units was less than 10 per cent for about a fortnight following the riots. Almost all shops and other establishments have had to down their shutters for varying periods at one time or the other in the Bombay and Thane districts. The wholesale commodity markets like steel, non-ferrous metals, agricultural produces and textiles have remained closed for many days. Though many of them have resumed working at present, the tempo of business has hardly picked up. According to the local textile markets the riots have proved a damper for trading during the normal pre-monsoon busy season, as the upcountry buyers preferred to keep away from commitments for fear of violence in Bombay.

The aftermath of the widespread violence has left at least 50,000 people shelterless both in Bhiwandi and Bombay. Even as this report is under print, about 12,000 people have been living in eight government relief camps at Bhiwandi township, and a further 3,000 at the three camps at Waghle estate in Thane and others at Vikhroli and Govandi. While the state government has decided to construct about 1,500 dwellings immediately for housing the shelterless people at Bhiwandi, no such measure has been contemplated in Bombay. The state has decided to set up a relief fund of Rs. 10 crores with immediate effect.

The state government has declared that it would give assistance to all those dishoused people for rebuilding their dwellings on the old plots on government land. The assistance would consist of a supply of six GS sheets, 20 wooden beams, two bags of cement and a cash aid of Rs. 750 for each such dwelling.

Those who had one-room tenements would be given a loan of Rs. 2,000 and a subsidy of a further Rs. 2,000 for reconstruction of their dwelling. In rural areas, the dishous-

ed people would be given priority in allotment of houses and sites under the existing programmes. For such people, the state would extend a loan of Rs. 700 and subsidy of Rs. 2,000 per dwelling. In the case of those whose houses were either damaged or burnt in rural areas, the government has come forward with a scheme providing Rs. 2,000 subsidy and a loan of Rs. 6,000 per house.

The number of those dishoused people, who swamped numerous private and government camps, in the wake of the riots was as high as 60,000 to 70,000. While several private agencies spontaneously came forward to distribute succour at these relief camps, the government also distributed such aid amounting to about Rs. 10 lakhs so far. It has been distributing a daily ration of 400 gms. of rice, 20 gm. of pulses, onions, potatoes and edible oil and milk for every person in the camp.

While the state government has been working out schemes for cash aid, a committee headed by Mrs. Bilkees Latif, wife of Air Chief Marshal Latif, governor of Maharashtra, has been engaged in distribution of aid in kind. So far, this committee has distributed about 2,000 aid kits worth about Rs. 10 lakhs. Of these, about 1350 kits have been distributed at Bhiwandi, and the remaining in affected areas in Thane and Bombay.

The aid kit has been so imaginatively planned as to meet the bare needs of a small nucleous family. Every kit worth Rs. 500 contains a bucket, utensils, spoons; plates; mugs, cooking and serving vessels, candles and matches, some foodgrain and pulses, a lantern, a wick stove; two saris, a set of pyjama, kurta and lungi, all neatly packed in gunny bags. According to Mrs. Latif, the committee has set a target for the distribution of about 5,000 such kits.

As a permanent measure for rehabilitation of widowed women, the committee has also planned to set up a training-cum-production centre for women soon.

Rs. 40 CRORE LOSS IN BHIWANDI RIOTS

(Times of India, June 5, 1984)

The total damage and destruction caused to plants and machinery, shops and establishments, godowns and dwellings by communal riots in the Bhiwandi township, mainly on May 18 and 19, 1984, has been of the order of Rs. 6 crores. And loss of production of textiles at the town's 2.5 lakh powerlooms since the communal flare-up has been a staggering Rs. 34 crores.

According to a quick exercise in evaluation of the economic losses by this correspondent, about 200 powerloom units had been either fully or partially destroyed accounting for destruction of fixed capital of Rs. 64 lakhs; four sizing units worth Rs. 10 lakhs had also been wrecked.

The total loss on account of their destruction or damage to about 300 shops, hotels, spare parts stores, bakeries; and other trading establishments was to the tune of about Rs. 45 lakhs.

In addition, three yarn godowns belonging to one community was totally looted while another yarn godown belonging to another community was set on fire. The total loss on account of these was about Rs. 2 crores.

Arsonists destroyed about 4,500 jhuggis and jhopris in the vast slums surrounding the township. The loss has been put at Rs. 2.25 crores. In addition about 100 'pucca houses' were also damaged accounting for a loss of about Rs. 10 lakhs.

REHOUSING BHIWANDI REFUGEES

(Sunday Observer, June 10, 1984)
By SUSAN ABRAHAM

Almost three weeks after the communal riots in Bhiwandi, a stream of people who had fled their homes when the town was being ravaged, returns daily. The atmosphere is still quite tense. Many local residents express the fear of 'outsiders' coming to loot and burn again. No

one has been able to relieve them of this paralysing fear, neither the government nor local politicians.

The proposed 1,500 houses to be built by the government have unaccountably been reduced to 800. The Collector Mrs. Joyce Shankaran said these were intended mainly for those who have been displaced as a result of bulldozing to clear destroyed basti settlements. Even these may not be adequate for the demand and will go by lots to the 'lucky' ones leaving the rest without any provision.

More than this it means that the major rehousing effort is being undertaken by the affected families themselves. It is estimated that over 6200 huts will be required. The government's assistance consists of providing some building materials, 2 bags of cement, 20 woodden posts; 6 corrugated metal sheets for roofing and Rs. 750 in cash to each family. But first the families must obtain permits. By Friday, in the monsoon drizzle, only 1700 permits had been issued. Further more there is no transport to carry the materials to building sites — 10, by 10' plots — which lie two to ten kilometres away.

Each hut site is 10 ft. by 10 ft. has been marked out on terraces. Many of the persons who will be occupying these sites have lived in larger spaces before. Further, according to Das, the height between each terrace is about five to six ft. Since no retaining walls have been built to hold the terraces, Das predicts that they will be washed away with the first rains. The top soil would also be washed away, making future construction more difficult. Apparently the Collector had been convinced of these problems but the area has nevertheless been bulldozed. The site engineer however maintains that no bulldozing had taken place.

One watched the construction site at Shanti Nagar, one of the sites where the government is to build new huts, with a sinking heart. Only a quarter of the work of building 228 huts is complete. On a concrete foundation of 10 x 12 ft, the huts are built with poles bound by mats for walls and metal sheets for roofing. They look like regimented rows of transit huts. They don't look as though they

would be able to withstand the monsoons. The site engineers said confidently that once the occupants move in they will strengthen and reinforce the huts. They did not consider any more government assistance necessary for this.

The way relief operations are being carried out in Bhiwandi, and the effect it is having on the people is proving the difficulties of re-building on the debris of death and decay. It is not the all-out effort that is in question. As the Collector put it, all other work in the tehsildar's office has come to a standstill. The revenue department, the PWP department, the tehsildar's office etc. have divided up the work of relief into food supply, reconstruction, health and so on. Each department has set itself a target of work to be completed within a certain time. Within this framework, little importance is paid to collecting feedback from the people about whether their needs are being met.

The government has set up eight relief camps in Bhiwandi, mostly in schools in the affected areas — at Naroli Talav school, Dagdi school; New Municipal Hospital; Vidyashram, Gaibi Nagar; Navibasti school; Rais High School and Nizampura municipal school. The relief operations consist of providing rice, dal and atta for two meals per family cooked on a community scale. Milk is also provided to card holders. The government started issuing cards, to the affected families one or two days after the riots started and stopped distributing cards on the 15th day according to RN Kolte, Asst. Commissioner of Relief, when asked about the increasing numbers, who have been returning to Bhiwandi after 15 days of the riots, he said the government could not help them.

Nor have cards been issued on a uniform basis. For instance in Navibasti SS Ghode, who was in charge of relief operations said that cards had been issued only to people staying at the relief camp and those who first came for them. Thus they have issued ,cards to 353 families whereas there must be at least 600 families staying there at present. Meanwhile a local organisation Nagrik Seva Mandal, started feeding some of the remaining lot with its own resources.

Bombay-Bhiwandi Riots Out-break of Communal Violence Phase II

BOMBAY'S ORDEAL

(Sunday Observer, July 1, 1984)

For those who have been watching with concern the trend of communal conflict in India's major cities in recent years, the fresh outbreak of violence in Bombay, so soon after the May riots left more than 200 dead, has not come as a surprise. What is happening in Bombay broadly follows the pattern of what's been happening in cities like Baroda and Hyderabad. After the first sustained orgy of violence, the victims are not allowed to pick up the pieces and begin life anew by returning to their homes, resuming work, sending their children back to school and trying to repair the fabric of damaged social relations in their neighbourhood. The provocations and the threats continue, making it clear to ordinary, peaceful members of both communities (who, without doubt, constitute the majority) that any attempts at re-establishing the normal rhythm of life is tantamount to flirting with death. As it is, the first violent outburst tears the tenuous bonds which link the two communities in the city's overcrowded slums — the sustained campaign of initimidation further fortifies the divisions. And then a knife in the dark, a lone pedestrian falls, and once again the fear of death governs the life of the victims. In such a situation, when people can see that those who are responsible for the crimes are boldly moving around their colonies, a cynical disregard for the law is

accompanied by the realisation that safety lies in supporting the man who wields the knife. The tally of dead bodies gradually multiplies.

The police have an obvious responsibility in this tragic collapse of law and order. By supporting criminals of one community against another the police not only ensure that the bloody saga of communal violence does not come to an end, but more dangerously, make the two communities captives in the hands of their respective criminal gangs. Gang warfare then is not merely, as in the past, a fight for the control of local underworld operations, but ruthlessly engulfs the entire population of the slums. And the dead, very often, are also the innocent.

During the May riots in Bombay there were serious charges of bias against the police. The fact that violence has erupted again shows that the police failed to do their duty even after the loss of so many lives in May. But Police Commmissioner Julio Ribeiro's press conference on Friday provides the reassurance that at least senior officials of the Bombay police are aware of the grave danger from this drift towards lawlessness.

Though at his meeting with reporters Mr. Ribeiro brushed aside a report in a Marathi eveninger of a circular from him to city police stations as "purely an internal matter", it is known that the police commissioner has pulled up his men for their lack of action against criminal gangs. Mr. Ribeiro asserted that he would not tolerate the attitude of helplessness among policemen and has warned in the circular of administrative action against those police officers who are unable to stop the Shiv Sena from enforcing bandhs in selected localities of the city. He has bluntly asked his men, "I want to know who is ruling this city — the administration or the Shiv Sena ?"

The Bombay police have acted swiftly this time in ordering reinforcements and picking up a large number of criminals. Yet there are disturbing reports from some of the worst-affected areas, like Bandra East, that police patrolling is still not free of the element of bias. In such

circumstances it is vitally necessary to ensure that the more volatile areas are put in the charge of unbiased, efficient and honest officers.

It is obvious that the police commissioner and other senior officials cannot ensure a return to normalcy unless they are fully supported in their task by the government. For ultimately it is not just police action but also political will which can win the battle against communalists. The government has already ordered the arrest of a group of local politicians; but it needs to go further and initiate a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the manace.

MASTAN, LALA AND 13 OTHERS HELD

(The Times of India, July 5, 1984)

Haji Mastan, the "reformed smuggler, Karim Lala; the alleged "kingpin" of the city's underworld, and 13 other persons were detained by the Bombay police under the National Security Act inconnection with the recent communal disturbances.

Yusuf Patel, another "reformed" smuggler-turned-builder who has figured in the FSI inflation racket being investigated by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, however slipped through the police dragnet. There are reasons to believe that he was tipped off about his impending arrest by highly-placed persons.

All the 15 arrested were connected in some way or another with the All-India People's Secretariat of which Haji Mastan was the president and Ibrahim Merchant was the general secretary.

The organisation, founded by Mastan after his "reformation", was alleged to be involved in financing and supplying weapons and incendiary materials like Molotov cocktails and acid bulbs to rioters.

The arrests are a sequel to the detention of 18 Shiv Sena shakha pramukhs and several other muscle men of both communities last week under NSA. Among those arrested was Madhukar Sarpotdar, vibhag pramukh who

was in charge of Shiv Sena shakhas in the eastern and western suburbs. Another Shiv Sena leader, Shrikant Sarmalkar, is absconding, the police said.

The 15 arrested today include the secretary of the People's Secretariat, Ibrahim Merchant, a doctor who used to attend a dispensary run by the secretariat Dr. Iqbal Shaikh, an advocate, Jalaluddin Hakimuddin Shaikh; and two alleged smugglers, Shakeel and Shamsi Ahmed.

Mr. Ribeiro said the arrests had nothing to do with the current nationwide crackdown on smugglers and were solely connected with the recent communal disturbances. He said action against anti-social elements and the city's underworld would continue. So far, 127 persons have been detained under the NSA since the crackdown began ten days ago.

Eight of those detained under the NSA today were arrested a week ago on charges of distributing bombs to create communal tension in Bombay. They were held under the India Explosive Substances Act after the police raided a place at Nagpada and found 43 crude bombs and other bomb making equipments.

Police sources said that huge quantities of big crackers were found at the premises. The explosive charge from these crackers was taken out and filled in tins with glass pieces and stones, string was wound round, and a wick provided for lighting them.

The police who had been keeping a watch at several places detained some persons at Vikhroli station. These persons were waiting for others from the secretariat, who were expected to deliver the explosives to them.

Thereafter, the police raided the Nagpada "factory" and arrested the secretary of the People's Secretariat, Ibrahim Merchant, Nihaluddin Hakimuddin Shaikh, Sultan Fakruddin Shaikh, Mohammed Siddique Altafkhan, Abid Ahmed Ghaffar Abdul Rehman, Sayyed Ahmed Sayyed Yakub and Moinuddin Hydersab Shaikh.

They were offered bail of Rs. 4,000 by Mr. C.T. Patil

additional chief metropolitan magistrate at the Esplanade Court but the offer was withdrawn when the police told the court that they were to be detained under the NSA.

Meanwhile, in a pre-dawn swoop, the police had arrested Mastan, Karim Lala, Dr. Shaikh; advocate Jalaluddin Shaikh; Abdul Rashid alias Rashid Arba, Ahmedkhan alias Basu and others.

Mastan had been arrested in 1984 under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (COFEPOSA) Act. He was released when the emergency ended, and was one of those who publicly vowed to give up smuggling. Police sources said his organisation, the People's Secretariat, was operating under the cover of a social organisation rendering medical and other aid to riot victims

Karim Lala, suspected to be a narcotics smuggler with international connections and alleged to be running extortion rackets, was arrested last year on the charge of kidnapping a businessman to recover money he allegedly owed to another businessman. His henchmen virtually patrolled the lane near the CID lock-up in the police headquarters compound at that time and questioned reporters covering the Esplanade Court where he was produced. A member of the Congress Party also petitioned the Prime Minister against his arrest, calling it the "harassment of a freedom-fighter".

UNI adds: Mr. Ribeiro said that Shakeel Ahmed and Shamsher who were engaged in smuggling activities on the Gujarat coast, were trying to smuggle in arms from abroad..

The cases filed against the Shiv Sena chief, Mr. Bal Thackeray, for his inflammatory speeches would be expedited, Mr. Ribeiro added.

Rajkot: Four persons were detained today under the NSA in Jamangar town, which was recently rocked by group clashes, for their alleged involvement in the riots.

RIBEIRO WARNS COPS OF THEIR SOFT ATTITUDE TOWARDS SHIV SENA

(Indian Express, June 30, 1984)

In a blunt circular, Police Commissioner Julious Ribeiro has asked his force, "I want to know who is ruling this city the administratiin or Shiv Sena?"

Mr. Ribeiro's internal note dated June 26 warned that erring police stations reporting bandh or any unpleasant incident would be "marked" for administrative action. He has pulled up his men for showing laxity in crushing criminal tendencies effectively.

When contacted on Friday night, the Police Commissioner said, "What is wrong in pulling up my erring men?". He asserted that henceforth he would not tolerate the attitude of helplessness among policemen.

The circular has been sent to all the police stations in Greater Bombay.

The main purpose of the warning according to Mr. Ribeiro, was to halt and reverse the drift towards lawlessness. The note adds, "When orders were given clearly to use force and beat the Shiv Sainiks who are going around ordering shops to close, the local police failed to do so. In Parel, Lalbaug, Andheri, Vile-Parle and Bhatwadi-Ghatkopar, Shiv Sainiks went round doing their job and police showed helplessness.

"Any police station which reports "bandh" from tomorrow onwards will be marked. The senior inspector will be transferred out immediately to non-executive posts".

Earlier at a press conference, he said there would be no disturbances on the day before Idd or afterwards.

He said elaborate arrangements have been made to prevent trouble during the weekend in the city. The feeling that riots would erupt after Idd was based on rumours planted by mischievous elements.

Every place of worship in the city will be protected by

either SRP men or policemen. Eleven SRP companies have been requisitioned while each police station will also have squads of Home Guards as additional personnel for bundobast.

In a bid to tighten security, the Bombay police held 1570 people, of which 55 have had cases registereu against them. In Govandi and Baiganwadi, slumlords would be kept under surveillance and stme of them may be detained.

Mr. Ribeiro was of the opinion that the slumlords were basically responsible for 'creating fear in the minds of people'.

PAKISTANI NOT INVOLVED IN THE RIOTS

Replying to a question, he said the 400-odd Pakistanis who have overstayed in the city were not responsible for the riots. There was no direct evidence to link any one of them with the disturbances.

The police force, which is inadequate, will soon be supplemented by 11 more police stations. Dahisar and Malvani sub-police stations will be upgraded into full-fledged stations, he added.

Another 1900 men may be inducted into the force which now numbers about 26,000, he said.